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## DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL,

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## OFFICIAL.

State of New-York—Secretary's Office.  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS.

### TO INHABITANTS AND OFFICERS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

The multiplicity of subjects daily brought before this Department, for the opinion or decision of the Superintendent on questions arising under the School Law, renders it necessary that some general principles should be laid down for the information of inhabitants and officers of school districts, in this respect.

1. In addition to the statutes themselves, relating to common schools, which have been carefully brought together, classified, arranged, and transmitted to every district in the state, a volume comprising all the important decisions made under those statutes, from the organization of the Department down to the year 1837, is in the possession of each district; and full and explicit instructions were transmitted with the volume of Laws, by my predecessor, with the view of supplying a constant and correct guide to all interested in the transaction of business connected with the common schools. Still, every day's experience demonstrates the necessity of additional explanations and instructions, from this Department, adapted to the constantly varying exigencies of particular cases. Such explanations and instructions will, at all times, be promptly and cheerfully furnished, whenever it is in the power of the Department to do so. Frequently, however, parties forward partial, incomplete and unintelligible statements, upon which it is impossible for the Superintendent to pass, with a just regard to the interests of the applicants or the district. It is of the utmost importance, in order to the prompt and efficacious settlement of questions upon which a difference of opinion prevails, that all the facts having any bearing upon those questions should be clearly, concisely and intelligibly stated: and to secure this indispensable requisite, the Superintendent recommends that in all such cases, even when not intended to be presented in the form of an appeal, the parties differing in opinion and requiring the views of this Department, should mutually agree upon a statement of facts to be presented. The adoption of this course will prevent all misunderstanding, secure the rights of all parties, and save the necessity of apparently conflicting opinions on irreconcilable statements.

2. Wherever the law itself, or the published decisions or instructions of the Department, furnish a solution of controverted points arising in the several districts, there would seem to be no necessity for an application to the Superintendent. And yet no inconsiderable portion of the daily correspondence of the Department consists of inquiries, a full and perfect answer to which would have been found, had the persons making them taken the trouble to refer to the laws, decisions and instructions in the possession of the proper officers of the district. The time of the Department is thus unnecessarily taken up, and the state subjected to a heavy expense in postage, simply because it is perhaps attended with less trouble to parties to address a line to the Superintendent, than to examine the laws and decisions for themselves. The great expenditure to which the state has been already subjected in its efforts to bring to the doors of every inhabitant of a school district a knowledge of the laws relating to common schools, and of the construction given to those laws, under almost every conceivable circumstance, should admonish those inhabitants to exhaust the means of information thus liberally provided before again resorting to the Department.

3. Applications for information and for relief are frequently presented at a period when effectual relief has been precluded through the negligence of the parties themselves. A tax is illegally voted, for a purpose not known to or authorized by law: it is improperly and wrongfully assessed: collected in defiance of all law: and a suit finally commenced. At this stage, the defendant applies to the Superintendent for relief, avows his ignorance of the law, and his entire inattention to its provisions, and solicits the interposition of the Department. Of course, such interposition cannot be granted. The affairs of the district are then, perhaps, hopelessly deranged, its officers subjected to heavy liabilities, and the inhabitants, with this disastrous experience before

them, disinclined longer to sustain the organization of the district. Cases of this kind are constantly occurring, and evince the indispensable necessity, on the part of district officers, of an accurate knowledge of their duties and responsibilities prior to any action in their official capacity; or, at all events, of a timely application to the Superintendent for the information necessary to enable them safely and intelligently to discharge the duties they have undertaken. An immense amount of litigation, the cost of which frequently falls upon those least able to bear it, and least interested in the subject matter of its origin, might be prevented by an early application to the Superintendent, presenting faithfully and fully the facts of the case, and requesting specific directions, in cases where directions cannot be found in the works already referred to.

4. A minor source of embarrassment, delay and expense both to the Department and to individuals, arises from the omission of correspondents to designate the post-office to which they wish their letters directed: especially where such post-office is different from that of the town at which such letters are dated. Unless otherwise requested, the Superintendent will always direct answers to letters to the post-office indicated by the date, and not the post-mark of the letter.

Albany, October 1, 1842.

Sup. Common Schools.

## LETTERS FROM DEPUTIES.

### CORTLAND COUNTY.

MISAPPREHENSIONS AS TO EXAMINATIONS OF TEACHERS CORRECTED—COUNTY CERTIFICATE OF HIGH VALUE—COUNTY CERTIFICATE VALUED, SOUGHT FOR—SUGGESTIONS OF DEPUTY ACTED ON CORDIALLY—CHEERING INDICATIONS—MUCH ACTUAL PROGRESS.

Cortland Village, Aug. 26, 1842.

I did not receive instructions from your Department until the winter schools had been for some time commenced; and consequently I held no fall examination of teachers. In the subsequent spring examination, few candidates presented themselves, and these were mostly females. But a very few male teachers are employed in the summer schools in this county. For the above reasons, little is known of the course pursued by the Deputy Superintendent in conducting his examinations; and, as I have repeatedly had occasion to ascertain, the most unfounded notions prevail in relation to it. While a portion view it with unbounded dread, and are discouraged from attempting to prepare for it, by the impression that it will be conducted with rigorous severity, and that a standard of education will be required falling but little short of a collegiate course; another numerous class have fallen into the opposite mistake, of supposing that it will assimilate to those merely nominal examinations, to which those who have already taught have become accustomed. I have aimed to correct both of these misimpressions, the effects of which would be equally prejudicial to that elevation of the standard of qualification in our teachers, which I deem it one of the most important and valuable objects of my office to promote. Without this exposition of my views, the first class of teachers alluded to would have been deterred from attending my examinations altogether, and the second might have come unprepared.

Partly from causes already stated, and partly from the caution which I have deemed it necessary to observe in granting certificates, I shall have conferred but a very few prior to my fall examinations—not probably to exceed about twenty. I grant none on a mere examination of literary qualifications. I require to see those placed on probation (placed so, on satisfying me in relation to moral character and literary qualification,) in the management of a school, to see whether they possess tact, industry and energy, in maintaining proper discipline, and carrying forward the education of their pupils. If they fail in any of these particulars, I refuse them my certificate until they shall have satisfied me of the necessary improvement. I consider it next to absurd to attempt to ascertain a teacher's qualifications in these particulars by merely questioning him at examination.

I am trying to infuse the idea into our teachers, that a county certificate is a prize worth laboring for; and though attainable by all, that zeal and effort will be required to reach it. I mean it shall be in all instances, when conferred by me, a badge of high qualification, ready tact and untiring zeal. I mean that it shall be so considered by the people of this county; and that the teachers possessing it, shall be sought after, placed in the most prominent schools, and receive the highest class of wages. This, I have thought, would render it the means in the hands of the Deputy of producing that elevation in the standard of qualification among our teachers, so deeply and universally needed in our schools.

Of course, I have not presumed to alter the scale of qualification prescribed by the State Superintendent; but I will take the liberty of saying that I have considered the requirements in arithmetic too limited. I think the male teachers at least, should be versed in this branch as far as laid down by authors in common use.

I would inquire if you would consider it objectionable in

certain cases to insert the word—"summer," before the words—"common schools," in the 6th line of the form of certificate, prescribed by the Superintendent, published on the 201st page of the book of Statutes, Forms, Regulations, &c. in relation to common schools.

The Superintendent directs that less shall be required of female teachers; from the fact that they are usually employed to teach the younger scholars of our summer schools. If a female is qualified to teach the advanced pupils of a winter school, as is not unfrequently the case, it strikes me she ought to have the same unlimited certificate that is granted to the male teacher: but if, on the other hand, she avails herself of an immunity, or exception, predicated on the assumption that she will only teach a summer school, it strikes me she ought not to receive a certificate which ostensibly puts her on a par with the better qualified teacher, and which gives her the same right and privilege to teach any school. Two recognized classes of teachers, with different grades of qualification, teaching under the same certificate will, I fear, lead to confusion and mistake. I would like to have my certificates full evidence of qualification as they purport to be, or confine them to the limit to which they are designed to extend. It has often occurred to me that another form of certificates for those qualified to teach summer schools would not be improper. If no such distinction should be made, I see not why any distinction should be permitted in the extent of qualification.

Perhaps, sir, on the whole subject of granting certificates, I am taking too high ground. Perhaps I overstep the spirit of the law, and the instructions of my superior. I should be extremely happy to receive your advice and direction in the matter. I have had no opportunity of conferring with my colleagues in any of the other counties, and I know not what course is generally adopted. However, I feel bound to say that I believe mine is producing, rapidly and fully, the end I have in view. The teachers in this county, whom I have met in the schools, seem universally animated with a strong determination to win the certificates; and I can see a most palpable change in the schools. Every suggestion is promptly acted upon by the teachers; many of them are carefully reviewing their studies, and everything betokens progress. Parents too are awakening to some extent, from the leaden lethargy in which they have so long reposed; and when they can be got out, I find them invariably disposed to sanction the views I have advanced, and approving of the most decisive and energetic measures which I feel called upon to resort to. I also feel bound to say that the town inspectors in this county, in every single town, are coming up to their duty like men. Their examinations of teachers have ceased to be merely nominal ones; and some have gone so far as to reject teachers to whom previously they had given certificates—in some instances given it to them for several years. The reason assigned by inspectors to the public in such instances has been that—"a new step has been taken, and a new spirit has gone abroad for the improvement of our schools, and they feel bound to second it—to contribute their efforts—even if in so doing, they declare to the world their own previous want of efficiency."

But, sir, I am trespassing too long upon your attention. You will find my circular but a crude affair, dashed off at a sitting; but I trust it will in spirit and in principle secure your approbation.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

HENRY S. RANDALL,

Deputy Superintendent, Cortland Co.

To, Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG.

[The editor received the circular addressed by Mr. Randall to the people of Cortland; also that of Mr. Barlow of Madison. In a future number extracts will be published from them.]

### WASHINGTON COUNTY.

EFFORTS TO AWAKEN INTEREST—FEMALE TEACHERS DEEPLY INTERESTED IN THEIR DUTIES—WASTE OF MONEY ON OUR SCHOOLS—SOME TEACHERS DEAR AT ANY PRICE—WANT OF APTITUDE TO TEACH—CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHERS ACCORDING TO ABILITY AND FIDELITY—ENCOURAGING INFLUENCE OF THE OFFICE OF DEPUTY.

Cambridge, Aug. 31, 1842.

Having just completed my first summer tour through that portion of this county assigned to my supervision, I hasten to present you with a brief synopsis of my official labors. Immediately after my return from the state convention of deputies in May last, I entered upon the discharge of my official duties, and have been actively engaged ever since; generally visiting two schools a day, and exerting my best influence, not only to arouse teachers to a just estimate of the importance and responsibility of their stations, but to awaken a deeper interest on the part of community in these great nurseries of political and religious freedom.

There are, as I learn from the reports of the commissioners, 112 organized school districts in the eight southern towns of this county; ninety-five of which were in operation at the time of my visitation, leaving, of course, seventeen vacant. Schools, however, have been kept for a quarter



or less period of time in all these districts, with the exception of some two or three: so that it may be said, with these few exceptions, schools have been taught in all the organized school districts in the eight southern towns of this county during the present summer.

With four exceptions, I have found all these schools under the care of female teachers; and while I feel constrained, in the faithful discharge of my official duties, to say that the great mass of our schools are far, very far from being what they ought to be, and that many, too many of them are at least half a century behind the age in which we live, it gives me unfeigned pleasure in bearing testimony to the fact, that the great mass of these teachers are young ladies of intelligence and high respectability; that many of them are ardently devoted to the great cause in which they are engaged, and while manifesting an anxious desire to become acquainted with the improvements of the day, possess intelligence enough to appreciate, and good sense enough to put in practice every suggested improvement.

It is a knowledge of this fact from which I derive my most confident assurance of final success. For while I know that there is a vast deal of misapprehension, as well as ignorant prejudice upon this subject in the county, I still know that "the school-master is abroad in the land," and hence I feel that the mists of darkness which now enshroud our path, and obstruct and retard our movements, cannot long withstand the enlightened influence of the concentrated action of such teachers.

Among the 114 teachers whom I have found engaged in the business of instruction since I commenced my official labors, I am happy in being able to state that, with two or three exceptions, my visits and suggestions have been well received and highly appreciated; and that in the few cases where it appeared otherwise, it evidently arose from extreme ignorance and self-conceit. It is gratifying however to know that the services of one of these recusants was soon after dispensed with; and I am sure the others ought and would have been, had there been intelligence or discrimination enough in the districts to have discovered and duly appreciated their demerits!

But notwithstanding the general respectability of the class of individuals having charge of our common schools, and their very laudable disposition to improve—the result of my observation—my examination into the state and condition of these schools, their practical workings, the influence which they are exerting, and their bearing upon the future, has more than ever confirmed me in my preconceived opinions, that they are far, very far from being what they ought to be, what they might be, or even what they are generally supposed to be! Upon this subject, therefore, I have no hesitation in saying, that there is no one subject upon which the sovereign people of this state pay so much money with so small a return, as in support of our common schools! And why is it so? It might perhaps be sufficient to answer, that one prominent reason why it is so, is the fact, that there is no one subject upon which they are called to expend money that they exercise so little supervision over its expenditure; or in other words, where they take so little pains to ensure anything like a suitable return for the amount of money which they do expend!

Most of our farmers and mechanics are expert in the art of cheapening merchandise and labor, and I do not say that they entirely fail in cheapening the business of teaching; but while they in the one case—that of labor—are sure, by a daily supervision, to secure a full equivalent for the money expended, in the other they seem to act as though the simple contract was all that was required to ensure a profitable bargain! While, therefore, there is no want of care to secure teachers cheap, of which I do not now complain, there is great and culpable neglect in ascertaining whether the services of those teachers, though obtained for a small compensation, are worth even that small sum contracted to be paid! For it is a fact, of which every man may be convinced, if he will take the pains to inform himself by visiting a few of the schools of our county; that while there are teachers whose services are cheap at almost any price, there are others whose services are dear at any price. But the truth of this important, and I had well nigh said, self-evident proposition is too often practically denied; for it is no uncommon occurrence for a district to reject the application of a first-rate teacher, whose services would be cheap at almost any price, to employ another of doubtful capacity because he or she could be obtained perhaps for a few shillings less; and then, at the close of the term, when too late to correct it, discover that to save perhaps the paltry sum of two shillings per week, they had thrown away, or sacrificed ten or twelve!

Now in my humble opinion, the great fault lies here; not in the price we pay, (though I do not think that there are sufficient inducements held out long to secure the services of eminent talents or qualifications in our schools) nor altogether to the deficiencies of the book knowledge of our teachers; but in their utter lack of the ability or capacity to teach! and their want of the proper discernment in the selection of our teachers! Book knowledge merely can never make a man an expert, judicious teacher, any more than simple acquaintance with the rules of rhetoric would make him an orator! And yet, this constitutes the great criterion by which we judge of the qualifications of teachers and their claims upon our patronage!

Upon this point I must be permitted to remark, that among the best educated teachers (I mean book knowledge simply) that I have found engaged in our schools, there are those of the least ability or capacity to teach; so that, were I applied to for my license, I should feel myself called upon to reject nearly as many teachers for their want of "ability to teach," as I should for their want of "learning." In fact, I may say that this is the prevailing fault among almost all our teachers: "a want of capacity or ability to teach," rather than a want of book knowledge!

In reference to this point, therefore, I have endeavored to divide the teachers, whose schools I have visited, into classes; and that you may judge of the propriety of my classification and of the truth of my previous remarks, permit me to say that in this classification I have been governed not only by the apparent "learning" of the teacher, but by the "ability" manifested to teach, as well as the adaptation of the system of instruction adopted by each teacher.

1st. Those teachers who gave evidence of a thorough

practical education, by a perfect familiarity with the subjects which they professed to teach, whose object appeared to be to make their pupils perfectly "understand" anything as they went along—who taught that while it was important to know how to spell correctly, and to pronounce in conformity with the standard of our language, it was infinitely more important that they should understand the true meaning of words—the signs of ideas; who endeavored to make the school-room a pleasant place of resort, by kind treatment and an anxious solicitude to promote the comfort and happiness, as well as usefulness of the children committed to their care; and who aimed to excite their pupils to a vigorous prosecution of their studies, not so much by a spirit of emulation as by a love of learning for its own sake; and who have introduced a system of oral instruction for the benefit of the smaller children of their charge, not unlike that of our infant schools.—I have put in the first class. Out of 114 teachers, I find 30 entitled to a place in this class.

2d. Those teachers whom I found pursuing the old routine system of simply hearing classes read and recite their "committed" lessons, who never practice questioning their classes about what they read, or the meaning of the important words of their lesson; who, even if they require the committing of rules, or the definition of words, or the marks of punctuation, &c. never investigate whether the scholar understands what he may have committed to memory; who seem to think that improvement in reading is to be estimated by the quantity of matter read, and the length of time engaged in it—whether words are pronounced correctly or pauses observed; in fine, who seem to act as though they thought their whole duty consisted in keeping order and passing through the accustomed routine of the day.—I have put in the second class. Of the 114 teachers, I find 60 entitled to a place in this class.

3d. Those teachers who were neither positively good nor positively bad, but seemed to possess a kind of negative character; who, while they would not knowingly teach anything bad, have neither the energy to direct nor the capacity to teach anything good; (such a thing can be, I have put in the third class. Of the 114 teachers, I find 25 entitled to a place in this class.

4th. Those teachers who were found to be extremely deficient in "teaching" government, and "ability to teach," I have put in the fourth class. Of the 114 teachers, I find 9 entitled to a place in this class.

#### Recapitulation.

Teachers eminently qualified, . . . . .	20
do. tolerably good routinists, . . . . .	60
do. indifferent, . . . . .	25
do. decidedly unfit for their station, . . . . .	9

Total, . . . . . 114

From the facts presented in this classification, I think you will agree with me in the remark, that our schools are not only not what they ought to be, but that they are not what they might be; to say nothing of the question whether they are what they are generally supposed to be or not!

There is one fact connected with this subject which I deem of considerable importance; and that is this: of the female teachers embraced in this first class,—and much the larger portion are females,—their wages do not average but a fraction over one dollar and seventy-five cents per week, exclusive of board! while the wages of an equal number of teachers taken from the second class averages over one dollar and eighty-seven cents per week! showing that the average wages of the best class of teachers actually falls short of the average wages of an equal number of those much less qualified; and the value of whose services are not to be compared with the others!

In closing this communication, for I see that I have already trespassed, permit me to remark with regard to the influence which the office of Deputy Superintendent is like to exert, and the benefits that may reasonably be expected from the present system of supervision, that I have found in those few schools which I have had an opportunity to visit a second time, a marked improvement, not only on the part of the scholars, but of the teachers, especially in the mode of teaching. So that were I to classify anew, from my observation upon a second visit, I should probably nearly reverse my tables. At least, a large portion of them here put in the second class, would claim and be entitled to a place in the first class.

If such therefore is found to be the actual result from this first effort—if such may be regarded as the first fruits—what may we not reasonably hope when the system shall be fairly brought into operation!

Respectfully,

WM. WRIGHT,

Dep. Sup. south sec. of Wash. Co.

To Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG.

#### FRANKLIN COUNTY.

CORDIAL CO-OPERATION OF INTELLIGENT CITIZENS—TRUSTEES NEGLIGENT OF DUTY—WRETCHED SCHOOL HOUSES—PATAGONIAN BENCHES—A SAW A VALUABLE AID TO MENTAL AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

Mira, Sept. 3, 1842.

DEAR SIR—I have now completed my second tour of visitations among the common schools of this county; and though we of this "Siberian region" are subjected to all the disadvantages incident to a new country, yet I am happy to say that the great cause of intellectual improvement is receiving a new impulse in this vicinity. Many of our most prominent men are heartily co-operating with us in the enterprise; and I trust that ere long our nurseries of learning will have received an impetus that all "the powers of darkness" cannot arrest. I am endeavoring to convince our inhabitants, that they can advance the prosperity of the schools in being more particular in their selection of teachers. We in some districts find everything at "loose ends," in consequence of the downright indifference of these officers upon every subject connected with the schools, excepting the "handling" of the public moneys. We shall make the attempt in many of our districts, at their next annual meetings, to secure the purchase of globes, and other apparatus, of which every school district in this county is almost entirely destitute; and likewise, if possible, consummate a

plan of furnishing the districts with dry wood—a perfect sine qua non in a well regulated school in this "region." Many of our apologies for school-houses are miserable indeed; having nothing about them, bearing even the semblance of convenience. In some instances, where I have found little children dangling upon a narrow bench too high for a full grown Patagonian, I have sent off and borrowed some carpenter's tools, and applied them to the heavenward benches in a manner that gave the apology a much more inviting aspect than when I entered it. Some of our school-houses are comfortable, convenient and neat; and in these respects, will not suffer in the comparison with those of any other county or state; but unfortunately, they are like "angel's visits—few and far between." By far, the majority of them are badly located, badly constructed, badly furnished, badly ventilated, and in too many instances badly used. However, by dint of perseverance, we hope to revolutionize, measurably at least, these outrages upon the munificence of the state.

Yours respectfully,  
D. H. STEVENS,  
Dep. Sup. Common Schools.

To Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG.

#### COLUMBIA COUNTY.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOLS ON THE FIRST VISITATION—MUCH TO DISHARTEN—DIRECTIONS IN TEACHING—SECOND VISITATION—THE HARVEST OF IMPROVEMENT ALREADY BRGUN—AN ACCOUNT OF METHODS OF TEACHING IN A GOOD SCHOOL.

Austell, Sept. 13, 1842.

DEAR SIR—Having completed my second tour of visitation through the county, I will give you an outline of my proceedings, and a brief description of the schools in this county. There are one hundred and eighty-six organized district schools in Columbia county. I have visited and examined one hundred and sixty-nine schools, and have visited one hundred and thirty-one schools the second time; making three hundred schools visited, and have examined and licensed eighty-eight teachers. During my first tour, I found many things to disharten and many obstacles in the way of improvement in the schools; many school-houses inconvenient; some entirely unfit for a school; windows broken to pieces, and boards nailed up in their places, doors off their hinges, and some of them in fragments—having to be braced up as an apology for a door; seats unprovided with backs for the small scholars, and so high that they cannot touch the floor; and desks so narrow as to be unfit for writing, and so un supplied with books, that three, four, and sometimes five scholars have one book; and even where there is a sufficient number of books, such a variety that the teacher cannot classify his scholars; a scanty supply of green wood for the comfort and convenience of the pupils; and last, though not least, a teacher who is as well qualified to instruct as the establishment is fitted to make the pupils comfortable; while the apathy manifested by the inhabitants is evinced in entirely neglecting to visit their schools. Upon the usual question to the teacher: have the trustees visited your school? "No." Have the inspectors visited you? "No; there has not been any individual into my school in three years;" and sometimes the reply is—"I have never had an inspector or commissioner visit my school." A gentleman remarked that he had made out the annual report for his district for five years in succession, and never reported that—"our school has been inspected the last year by an inspector of common schools." In other districts, an entirely different aspect was presented. A convenient school-house; a good teacher; scholars well supplied with books and blackboards, and other apparatus for the pupils; and a good degree of interest manifested by the proprietors; the schools regularly visited by the trustees and inhabitants. During my first tour, I enforced upon the teachers the importance of more attention to the first principles of an education; to be more particular in spelling, and not to allow the scholars—as many teachers did, to spell without pronouncing each syllable distinctly, and to have every letter articulated plainly; in reading, to have the scholars understand what they read; in arithmetic, to be certain that the scholar understands the first principles perfectly, and then each rule in its order; thus laying the foundation of an education in the proper manner to benefit the scholars.

I have been much gratified in my second tour with the improvement, (especially in those schools where the same teachers have been continued,) made in all the schools; and in many of them even more than I had anticipated; and as an evidence that the improvement has been good, I will mention the way the exercises in reading are conducted in one of our best schools: the lesson was in the History of the United States: the class, consisting of six or eight pupils. After having a specimen of correct reading from the teacher, each of the class read three sentences; they were then questioned on the subject of their lessons very particularly; and from the correctness of their answers, and their readiness to answer, it was evident they understood—that the meaning had something to do with the reading. They were then asked the meaning of many words that occurred in their lesson; and the promptness and accuracy of their definitions clearly showed that they understood what they had been reading. General Morgan was mentioned in their lesson. The teacher wrote "Morgan" upon the blackboard, and requested the class to analyze it, which was done in the following manner. M, is a consonant; a consonant is a letter which cannot be distinctly sounded without the aid of a vowel, and has but one sound, and is never silent. O, is a vowel; a vowel is a letter, the name of which constitutes a full and open sound; has six sounds: a long sound, a long broad sound, a short broad sound, the long slender sound of o, the sound of short oo, and the sound of a short. R, is a consonant; a consonant is a letter that cannot be sounded without the aid of a vowel; has two sounds; is never silent. G, is a consonant, defined as before; has two sounds, a hard sound and a soft sound. A, is a vowel; a vowel is a letter which can be perfectly uttered by itself, has three sounds: the sound of short a as in said, and the sound of short i and short u in unaccented syllables. N, is a consonant; a consonant has been defined; has two sounds, and is silent when l or m precedes. The word is spelled: it is a dissyllable; a dissyllable is a word of two syllables. Facts: General Morgan was an officer in the revolutionary war



had the command of the riflemen, gained a splendid victory over the British at the battle of the Cowpens in Virginia. 2d scholar. Morgan was in the battle of Saratoga, and contributed much towards gaining the victory. 3d scholar. Morgan particularly distinguished himself at Quebec; and after General Arnold was wounded, had command of the American troops, and always exhibited great prudence and bravery. Continuing in this manner through the class: each scholar presenting some fact relating to that distinguished officer. And at the same time, that the first principles have been thoroughly attended to, the higher branches have not been neglected; and many of our district schools equal our best select schools; and are not only an ornament to the county, but also to the state. Respectfully yours,

DAVID G. WOODIN,  
Dep. Sup. for Columbia Co.

To Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG.

## DISTRICT SCHOOL JOURNAL.

FRANCIS DWIGHT, EDITOR.

NOTICE.—Those who have paid 75 cents, according to the notice given in the first number, will be entitled to the Journal for 18 months.

### Our Winter Schools.

TO THE TRUSTEES AND PATRONS OF OUR DISTRICT SCHOOLS.

"Let the learning of your children be liberal; spare no cost, for by such parsimony all is lost that is saved."—WILLIAM PENN.

We devote this number to the means of improving our winter schools. We would have them a blessing to each and to all of the eleven thousand districts that dot our state. Year after year the school has been neglected, its teacher uncheered in his arduous duties by sympathy or co-operation, and your children's improvement unheeded and almost uncared for. We speak plainly, but truly. In more than six thousand school districts, the errors and indifference of parents have perverted the most powerful means of their children's happiness, chilling their interest in self-improvement, marring their prospects of success in after-life, and endangering their social and moral condition. If this be true of your district, determine that it shall be so no longer. Let this season be the beginning of a new era in the education of your children. Use but a small portion of that care and forethought in their improvement, which you give to the culture of your farms and the breeding of your cattle, and no summer's harvest, however abundant, ever rewarded your labor so amply as shall this winter's district school. Remember that if this duty be neglected, the property, which you toil to accumulate, will be squandered, or kept to its owner's hurt; but that a good education cannot be lost. Its capital defies the fluctuations and convulsions of trade; its income is not merely dollars and cents; but what was never purchased at Mammon's counter,—buoyant feelings, happy thoughts, unfulfilling hopes. And if money should be the low aim of all your desires, the success of your children in gathering that delusive harvest of life will be infinitely more probable, if you secure to them sound principles and a good education; and, what is far better, they will be loved while they live, and mourned when they die.

We have said, give but the same attention to your children when at school, as to your cattle in your stalls, and your teacher will at once become a powerful instrument of good. If it sound harshly, "strike, but hear" an "over true tale" of that apathy and faithlessness, which starves the very life out of so many of the people's schools: In a town, that shall be nameless, Tom, a shrewd, industrious laborer, was employed to take care of the stock of a large farm. A herd of pigs received a share of his attention, and hardly a day passed that the farmer came not out to see his porkers well fed, and to talk with Tom on the prospect of their being fat for a market. When October came around, it chanced, as happen it will in about half of our districts, that the worthy trustees were too busy in sowing their winter wheat, to think of seeding down the minds of their children, and had neglected to hire a teacher for their winter school. Looking about for some one, who would do, they pitched on Tom, as being a smart fellow, who knew the three Rs, and would mind his Ps and Qs. Tom got his certificate and opened his school, and among his pupils found three children of the worthy farmer whose pigs he had fed during the summer. But the same man, who seldom allowed a day to pass without ascertaining whether Tom took care of his pigs, never, during the whole winter, made a visit to the school-house, or asked a single question about the condition and improvement of his children.

Can this story be told of you, reader? And will you not, now and forever, resolve, that such faithlessness to your highest duties shall no longer jeopard the best interests of your children. We hope, then, that you are prepared earnestly to ask,

### WHAT CAN BE DONE TO MAKE OUR WINTER SCHOOLS A BLESSING TO OUR DISTRICT?

First.—The school house can be put in order. Are there no clap-boards to be nailed on? No lights to be set? No leaks in the roof to be stopped? No broken stove to be replaced? No backless benches, on which your children have hitherto been tortured, their feet swinging out of "all soundings," their bodies bent double, suffering pains and penalties unknown to the convicts of our penitentiaries, and laying the foundation of complaints which make life one long disease? It is not strange that your children should creep unwillingly to school, that the teacher should seem a task-master, the school-house a prison. Let it be so no longer. A few hours labor, wisely directed, will not only infinitely increase the comfort of your children, but enable teacher and pupil to give undivided attention to their respective duties and secure the advancement of the school.

The VENTILATION of the school-rooms in the newer and better class of school-houses should be carefully attended to. For economy of fuel, the close stove is now often substituted for the old fashioned fire-place, while there are no crevices for a free current of air to pass through the room in which forty or fifty children are breathing; consequently the atmosphere rapidly becomes unfit for respiration, the children weary and restless, their mental vigor relaxed, and all successful study ceases. A caution to the teacher to let down the sash, if there is no proper ventilator in the room, and an occasional visit to see that it is done, will save the children many weary hours and lost days. Pure air and enough of it, is entirely consistent with warmth and comfort.

Education should be associated with that which is pleasant and agreeable, and not with that which is painful and disgusting; its object should be, not the mere acquisition of facts, but the improvement of the mind and the heart, the habits and manners of the pupil. If, instead of a neat and commodious school-room, adapted to the wants and comforts of your children, you shut them up within four filthy walls, amidst nauseous vapors, surrounded by dirty, high, mutilated benches, and disfigured by obscenities, can you expect that in such a place your children will be educated in goodness and virtue? And if, by any possibility, the pupil becomes intelligent, is there not danger that his talents will be mischievous to others, and ruinous to himself?

Second.—Let a stock of good fuel be now laid in. Instead of a scanty supply of green logs and soggy, rotten branches, the refuse of the wood-yard, buried in snow and mud by the school-house door, let dry wood be brought, stored and prepared for burning. It is economy in every point of view. How much time was lost, last winter, by depending on each man "who sent" to supply his share of wood? Wretched encouragement to the teacher, to visit his school day after day and find neither fire nor wood. The mere drudge who teaches for the money, may care little if he can but draw his wages, but the true teacher, who loves his duties, must fail, though he were a Pestalozzi, in managing successfully such a school. Consider, too, the unhappy influence on your children. Will they believe their parents truly interested in their education? Had they ever held such a belief, it will be frozen out of them, and going to school be soon regarded as a kind of penalty to be paid, for the sin of being a child.

We believe we are within the truth, in stating that in many districts, more than one-quarter of the winter term is absolutely lost from a want of suitable fuel. Almost every forenoon being disordered, studies constantly interrupted, and improvement almost hopeless. Is not this thriftless management?

### A GOOD TEACHER MUST BE ENGAGED.

"As is the teacher so is the school."  
"A cheap teacher is usually a dear bargain; you save a few shillings and lose the time and improvement of your children."  
"Nothing costs more than the bad habits of your children: do not hire a teacher to form them."

We need not urge on trustees the importance of instant attention to this duty. If the teacher of last season was competent and faithful, engage him, if possible, anew. Frequent changes are a grievous injury to the school; not only are weeks lost before the children are accustomed to the management of the new master, but he unconsciously often undoes much of the work of his predecessor. And beware lest you are misled by the false economy of hiring a cheap teacher. You may, by chance, hire low a young and inexperienced teacher, who will keep a good school; but it is safer to secure an approved master, for a school well taught for two months, is better for your district, than a poor school kept four.

And consider the great loss to your children, when, after making creditable proficiency under one teacher, you transfer them to another, under whose mismanagement all good habits are broken up, and all study interrupted. Surely, the evils your children suffer from your neglect of the duty of

selecting a good teacher, must make every trouble seem light which will prevent their recurrence.

Should no competent male teacher be found, we earnestly entreat you to entrust your winter school to the charge of a qualified female teacher. The reports of our county superintendents show that many of the best schools were last winter taught by female teachers, some of which had previously been remarkable for their insubordination. In Massachusetts the same fact has been abundantly verified. Muscular power and brute force are not the proper means of discipline; the judicious teacher rules by the law of love, and firmness and kindness make government easy and obedience pleasant. A bad boy dare not resist the mild but firm government of a judicious woman, for he feels that the public opinion of the district is against him, and that it would indignantly resent any rudeness offered to a daughter of the district. Whatever the explanation of the fact may be, and however incredulous of its truth, we refer you confidently to the vast experience, and we venture to predict, that while the well instructed female teacher generally excels in that aptness to teach, which is the highest requisite of the educator, she equals the male teacher in the difficult duty of school government.

By employing a female teacher, the district can, in most cases, avoid the great evils of frequent changes, and also save a large portion of the expense of education. If, then, you cannot secure the services of a highly qualified master, we urgently request trustees to entrust their school to a judicious female teacher. You will not regret it.

What then should be the

### QUALIFICATIONS OF TEACHERS?

"If matters do not go well in the school, the teacher must look for the cause in himself."—SALZMAN.

That all interested in improving our schools may secure the benefits of thorough teaching in their districts, we earnestly commend to their attention the following admirable suggestions of Dr. Humphrey, extracted from the Connecticut Common School Journal:

This is confessedly a very essential element in the great system of popular education, and the season of the year when thousands of schools are about to commence, seems as favorable as any other, for drawing public attention to the subject. That no person ought to undertake any important trust, till he is qualified for it, is so consonant to the common sense and judgment of mankind, that it would be a waste of time to argue the point for a single moment. Every body admits and insists, that the mechanic is not fit to be employed till he is master of his trade; and who would think of confiding his property, his health, or the infinitely higher interests of his soul, to the merest pettifogger, or quack, or religious sciolist that might happen to want employment? Even the young colt, when he is to be shod, or bitted, or broken into the saddle or harness, must be put into the hands of persons who understand their business. And it is equally a dictate of common sense, that the higher and more sacred the trust, and the more momentous the interests which it involves, the more essential are adequate and thorough qualifications in him who undertakes it. If a bungling cobbler spoils my boots in making, I can throw them away and get another pair. If a tailor, equally ignorant of his trade, sends me home a coat which I cannot wear, the worst that can happen is the loss of the cloth. If my watch is rendered utterly and forever useless, by passing through the hands of a mere blacksmith, instead of a skillful goldsmith, I can do without it. If my horse is spoiled in shoeing, or breaking, a hundred dollars will replace him. If I lose my cause in court for want of an able advocate, I may perhaps bear the loss without any very great inconvenience. And if the blustering, all-knowing quack, whom I have been foolish enough to employ, keeps me upon my bed half a year, when I might have been about my business, I may possibly recover at last, in spite of his nostrums. In each of these cases there is a loss, but in some of them it is much greater than in others; and every wise man will be particular about the qualifications of those with whom he entrusts his property, or his life, in proportion to the interests at stake.

Now apply this rule to the case in hand. You are about opening your winter school, of fifty scholars; your own children, "bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh," and you want a teacher. Here, is not a garment to be cut, nor a watch to be repaired, nor a title to some small piece of property to be tried, but fifty immortal minds to be instructed, swayed, fashioned, polished—educated. Here, are all the diversities of age, talent, disposition and temperament, to be studied, guided, stimulated or repressed, and moulded into all the forms of virtue, intelligence and usefulness. Here, habits of study, or of idleness, of subordination, or untractableness, are to be formed, which in all probability will hold their sway through life. And here too, in this very school, and this very season, may be the turning point between life and death. Whether your darling child is to be an ornament or a burden and curse to society, is to be saved or lost, may depend far more than you are aware of, or than you will ever know till the judgment, upon the character and qualifications, the faithfulness or unfaithfulness of the school-master. "What manner of person ought he to be?" What are the essential qualifications for the discharge of duties so high, so difficult, so unceasing and so pregnant with mighty results?

### COMMON SENSE.

The first qualification which I shall specify, is good common sense. The meaning of this term every body understands well enough, however difficult it may be to define it. There are a great many men in the world who have all other kinds of sense but this. They have great, brilliant talents, and their minds are highly improved by reading, study and



reflection. They are extremely well versed in history, philosophy and politics. They are at home in the most polished and enlightened society. They take large views of men and things, and can reason upon abstract principles and general propositions, with extraordinary power; but their knowledge is not of a popular cast; it is not practical. Their habits of thinking and observation are not practical. They cannot come down to the every day concerns of life, and mingle familiarly with the middling and lower classes, so as to study their characters, and learn how to approach and influence them to the best advantage. Hence they are continually making false steps, and falling into mistakes, where men of vastly inferior powers and acquirements, as if by a popular instinct, succeeded perfectly well. The grand and only difficulty is, they want common sense.

Now it certainly does not require great abilities to keep a common school; but it does require a good share of common sense. It does require a knowledge of human nature as it is developed and modified by circumstances, in the ordinary walks of life. The school-master must know how to take parents, as well as children, as they are; or in common parlance, he must know how to approach them on the right side; to gain their confidence; to correct and enlarge their views, and to enlist them warmly in all his plans. If instead of this, a teacher seems to descend upon the district as a being from some higher sphere, and never having been taught himself in the school of common sense, runs against every post, and trips against the end of every loose board; if, in short, he does not know how to become "all things to all men," and that without sacrificing his own independence, however well qualified he may be in other respects, he cannot succeed. In spite of all his efforts, every thing will go wrong. The scholars will not like him; the parents will not be satisfied. He may possibly worry it through, in spite of all this jarring and friction; but he had better withdraw, and console himself with the reflection, if he pleases, that the sphere is too narrow for the exercise of his talents.

#### WELL EDUCATED.

My second remark is, that he ought to be well educated. How can he instruct others in what he has never thoroughly learned himself? All the good sense in the world, essential as this qualification is, would not fit him for the teacher's chair, without a familiar acquaintance with the studies of the school. I say a familiar acquaintance, because if he cannot hear a class read without looking over every moment, or correct bad spelling in a composition without fumbling in the dictionary, or write a letter himself without making a dozen mistakes in orthography and the placing of capitals; if he knows so little of figures, as to be hindered and puzzled every time a slate is handed to him by a bewildered novice, and has so little knowledge of grammar as to boggle and blunder in the easiest lessons, he is not fit for a school-master, whatever else he might do. If he would keep the school for nothing, and "find himself," no district could afford to employ him. Children's time is infinitely too precious to be wasted under the care of a master who is not half educated himself in the very branches he is required to teach. And besides the loss of the winter, bad habits of spelling, reading, writing, and the like are inevitably contracted, under an incompetent master, which it will take another winter to correct. To manage and instruct a school well, a teacher must see things at a glance, and must be able to correct mistakes at the instant. He has no time to study the lessons in school, and very little out of school. He must come with a well furnished mind, or else, with all possible efforts to make up the deficiency as he goes along, he cannot meet the reasonable expectations of his employers. And it makes but little difference how much he knows in the higher branches of education, if he is ignorant of the elementary principles, or if they are not quite familiar to his mind. He may even be able to construe Greek and Latin with considerable accuracy, and yet be miserably deficient in some of the commonest branches of an English education. In such cases, a parent may be assured for his comfort, when he complains of his children not being taught correctly in the common school, that the master has been half through college; but the evil is none the less for that. A child may just as well be badly taught by an ignoramus as by a graduate.

#### APTNESS TO TEACH.

A third essential qualification for a school master, is aptness to teach. However well he may understand the theory, and however affluent he may be in all needful attainments, if he lacks the gift of communication, he can never be a useful teacher. His knowledge is a hid treasure, a sealed fountain, which may be a source of high enjoyment to the possessor, but can be of no advantage to the pupils.

#### SELF-CONTROL.

A fourth qualification of great importance in a school-master, is entire self-control. The temperament of some persons is altogether too mercurial for the school-room. So ticklish are their nerves, that they cannot bear one atom of friction. They want to have every boy sit up as straight as a candle, and be as still as a mill-stone, and as mute as a pickarel. When every thing does not go exactly right, in a cold morning, it frets them exceedingly; and it requires but little provocation to throw them quite out of their guard. And then they are sure to say or do something which they will be sorry for the next moment; and which hardly ever fails to lower them in the estimation of their scholars.

Now whatever else such a man may undertake, he ought never to think of keeping school. Nerve, in this case, is a very different thing from nerves. The former he must have, or he will not succeed; but the fever of the latter he carries about him, the better for himself, and for all concerned. I will not say, that it requires the patience of Job to teach and manage a large school, because his trials were of a very different kind; but it certainly does require a great deal of patience. A teacher has so many different tempers, intellects and habits to deal with; so many questions to answer at the same moment; so many pens to make and mend; so many classes to hear; so many sums to look over and correct; and so many rogues to watch, that he must have a good deal of self-discipline to keep perfectly cool and steady through it all, when he has sixty or seventy, or even thirty scholars; and is shut up with them six or seven hours a day, with the thermometer sometimes at blood heat, and sometimes nearly down to zero.

My next remark is, that he ought to have a particular fondness for teaching. This remark is founded on a very important general principle, viz: that in every employment, other things being equal, men succeed best in what suits their taste.

If a person loves to teach, loves to be surrounded from morning to night, by a group of young immortal beings, whose minds are continually expanding; and loves to watch their progress in all the elementary branches of education, his task, which to another might be insupportably irksome, will be pleasant; the thousand little annoyances and perplexities which every teacher must meet with, will scarcely be felt; the time will be too short for his daily exercises; his engagement will expire ere he is aware of it; and great as may have been his toil, he will close the school with regret. Such a teacher, when his other qualifications are respectable, will be almost sure to succeed any where. Every body will see that he is seeking, not his own ease and emolument, but the good of his pupils; he will infuse something of his own enthusiasm into their minds; the confidence of his employer will be secured and all things will go well. But on the other hand, if the school-master whom you employ would never teach another day if he could help it; that is, if he could do as well for himself in some other way; if his grand object is to get so many dollars a month; if he had rather begin every morning a few minutes too late, than too early; if the time hangs heavy upon his hands, and he puts his watch often to his ear, and wonders when it will be noon; if the greatest interest he takes in the children, is to send them back every night to their parents; if he spends more thoughts in contriving how he shall get through the winter, with the least amount of labor to himself, or with the least interruption to some ulterior object of pursuit; or if he tries to be faithful, merely in obedience to the dictates of conscience, while his "heart and flesh" are all the while crying out, O, what a weariness, what a weariness! if, in fine, he has no real fondness for teaching, but rather an aversion, let him not thrust himself into a place which might better be filled by another. Let him find something else to do, which he likes, if he can; and if he cannot, it is better to betake himself reluctantly, if he must, to almost any other employment for a livelihood, than school-keeping.

#### GOOD PRINCIPLES.

Another prime and essential qualification in a school-master, is good principles. In all ordinary cases, when we are about to confide any of our interests to a third person, one of our first questions is, can we trust him? Is he honest? Will he be faithful? And we are the more particular and anxious in proportion to the value of the stake. Now what higher responsibility can a parent devolve upon another, than the right moral direction of the minds and hearts of his children? Next to the parent, certainly, no one has so much influence over the child, as a popular teacher. The chair which he occupies is his throne. His word is law, to which all his juvenile subjects implicitly bow. He holds their whole moral destiny, as it were, in his hands. What he believes, they believe. What he says, they repeat. If he is a man of high moral principle, they will soon find it out; and they will be ready to embrace whatever sentiment he expresses, because they love to admire the man. Even when he takes no particular pains to mould their characters, there will go out from him a silent and pervading influence, which will be none the less potent for being unseen and unsuspected. The price of such a teacher is "above rubies." Many, in after life, will "rise up and call him blessed."

#### HIGH MORAL CHARACTER.

I remark again, that a school teacher should be a person of the most pure and elevated moral character, without a stain, and above suspicion. The thought of committing the children of twenty Christian families to the care of a profane man, of an intemperate man, or of a dishonest man, is monstrous; and I am happy to know, that the moral sense of the community revolts at it. However great the moral delinquencies of some parents may be, there are few, I trust, in the land, who would be willing to employ a school-master of bad character.

But are not some districts even now, too careless in this matter? Is the moral standard every where as high as it ought to be? Are the most ample credentials always required? Are not some men found in the schools, every winter, who are employed rather out of compassion for their families, or from motives of economy, than from any great confidence in their moral qualifications? Every school-teacher ought to be a pattern of "whatsoever things are pure, lovely, and of good report," as well as able in every branch of instruction. Nor is it sufficient that a master keep himself within the rules of propriety, during the continuance of his school. If he is chargeable with any plain violation of the decalogue, with any looseness of morality while he is engaged in other pursuits, he is thereby disqualified for the responsible duties of a public teacher. If it is known that he sometimes uses profane language, or that he does not strictly regard the Sabbath, whether at home or abroad; or that he is ever in the slightest degree disguised with strong drink—any such delinquency is a disqualification for the office of instructor. Children are quite too strongly inclined, at the best, to stray into forbidden paths, and they need all the force of precept and example, both in the family and in the school, to keep them "in the way they should go." How mischievous, then, how ruinous, must be the influence of a popular school master, who carries about with him the slightest blemish in his moral character. I shall only add,

#### SINCERE PIETY.

In the last place, that sincere vital piety is an exceedingly desirable qualification in a school-teacher. There is nothing like the "fear and love of God shed abroad in the heart," to make a man faithful in any profession, employment or undertaking.

I am quite aware that piety, in the absence of other qualifications, cannot make a good school teacher, any more than it can make a good civil ruler, a good preacher, or a good physician. And it is certain, that some men of sound Christian principles and high moral standing, though not members of the church, are upon the whole far better teachers than some others, whose piety is unquestioned and unquestionable. I do not say, therefore, that none but professors of re-

ligion should be employed. The number of such who are otherwise competent, is very inadequate, at least in some parts of the country; and we are bound to be thankful for the best talents and qualifications we can command. Still, other things being equal, vital piety is a crowning excellence in the character of a teacher; and I hold it to be the bounden duty of Christian parents to enquire for such teachers; and to give them the preference when they can be had.

#### SCHOOL GOVERNMENT.

Every school must be governed. No system of popular education can be sustained, or ought to be sustained, where the scholars are masters. We send our children to school to be under "governors," as well as tutors; to "learn obedience," as well as to be able and faithfully instructed in the elements of useful knowledge.

In the first place, their own best good requires it. The boy that is allowed to do as he pleases in school, is not the boy to apply his mind diligently and successfully to his studies. He has too many other things on his hands. And what is true of one individual, is true of the whole school. Where there is little or no order and subordination, not one in ten will be disposed to make the most of his time and opportunities, if he could; and not one in the school, be it ever so large, will be able to, if he would. How can he! Want of government is but another name for universal disorder. And where lawless confusion reigns, where there is every thing to distract the thoughts and nothing to fix them, how can you look for study and improvement? It is only where the discordant elements of a district are brought together and subjected to a controlling central power, and every thing falls into its proper place, and is kept there, that any educational system will succeed. The school must first be hushed to silence; every scholar must have his place and his task assigned him, and the question of entire subjection to rules must be settled, before there can be any real study. This being admitted, it follows, that you could hardly inflict a greater personal injury upon your children, than by sending them to an ungoverned school, for they would not only lose their time, but contract habits of insubordination, which would expose them to a thousand indiscretions and dangers in after life.

In the next place, the great interest which parents have in the education and good conduct of their children, requires that the schools to which they send them should be well governed. If children are not kept in proper subjection at school, it will be far more difficult to control them at home. What the parent does one day to secure implicit obedience in his family, may be counteracted and nullified by a ruinous laxness in the school, the next. How often has this counteraction been felt and deplored. And besides, are not "the children which God hath given us," "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh?" Can they lose their education, or any part of it, for want of proper discipline, and we not suffer with them? Can they become restive under the wholesome restraints of society, in consequence of not having been kept under due subjection in school; can they violate the laws of the state, and suffer the penalty, and we not smart for it ourselves? It were impossible.

It seems hardly necessary to add, once more, that the whole community has a deep stake in the government of its common schools. What it wants for its higher security and prosperity, is the greatest possible number of good and enlightened citizens—men, who having been accustomed to subordination in the family and the school, are prepared to submit, as a matter of course, to all the needful restraints of civil society. In well governed schools you find all the elements of a well governed state, and without these essential elements in the former, who will answer for a cheerful and sacred regard to the laws in the latter?

But who are to be the governors, in our elementary and higher schools? The teachers, certainly, if any body. We call them school-masters, and so they ought to be. But how can a man who has no talent for government, hold the reins with a strong and steady hand? He may stamp and threaten—he may ferule and flog, and thus make transgressors occasionally "afraid of his terrors;" but if there is nothing in his mind to sway the minds of his pupils; if he does not know how to bring into subjection, by some better influence than mere dread of punishment, he cannot be said to govern. There may be, and often is, a great deal of severity, where there is very little government. The faculty of which I am speaking, may doubtless be very much improved by experience. But some very estimable persons never can establish and maintain a proper degree of authority in the school-room, and therefore ought at once to withdraw and give place to those who can.

Every experienced teacher, I believe, will agree with me, that it is vastly more difficult than is commonly imagined, to take the children of twenty or thirty families, and keep them for several months, in such a state of subordination as the best interests of a school require. "What easy work," said a loiterer to his neighbor, who had an uncommon sleight in using the scythe, "what easy work it is, to see you mow;" and so, many persons who look in upon a well regulated school, may be ready to exclaim, "What an easy task it is, to keep all these children quiet in their places, and busy in their studies;" but it is because they know very little about it. To succeed well, requires not only a natural tact, but unceasing vigilance and untiring energy.

#### MORAL GOVERNMENT.

The government of our schools, as well as of our families, must be mainly a moral government. Every successful teacher does much more by persuasion and personal influence, than by the rod. The children of every primary school are capable of understanding, and in some measure appreciating, the high considerations of duty and religion. They can be addressed as moral and accountable beings. The advantages as well as obligations of diligent study and uniform good behavior, can be brought down to the comprehension of the youngest scholars.

The Bible, in the hands of a pious and devoted teacher, will do more than half a cord of cherry rulers, or a whole swamp of thrifty birches. "Here," taking up the sacred volume, "here is God's book. It is just as binding in the school-house, as it is in the family; and I ask none of you, than it requires. You must not swear, you must not steal, you must not lie. I will give you chapter and verse for it.



You must honor and obey your parents, for the Bible requires it, and it is right; and if you do, you will as a matter of course cheerfully conform to the laws of the school. You must have no angry disputes, no quarrels among yourselves. I give the golden rule for it—'All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' This is a mere glance at the use which I think every teacher is bound to make of the Scripture, in the government of his school. I believe that if instructors were a great deal more familiar with the Bible than they are, and a great deal more in the habit of appealing to it, they would find some warning, some command, some prohibition, some tender appeal, some tender example, or some touching historical incident, applicable to every case of reproof, or discipline, that can arise in the government of even the largest school.

#### WRITTEN LAWS AND REGULATIONS.

Any system of school government, drawn out in full upon paper, must, if I am not very much mistaken, cause a teacher infinite embarrassment in the administration. I very much doubt whether a school was ever well governed upon this plan. Twenty cases will occur in a day, where the teacher has trammelled himself with written enactments and penalties, that will give him a vast deal of needless trouble. If he was only at liberty to exercise his discretion, in view of all the circumstances, as the cases actually arise, he would get on very well; but there is the law, posted up and staring him in the face, and what can he do but execute, even when his judgment tells him it were better either to forgive the offender, or punish him in some other way. No two cases of roguery or perverseness in a hundred, though all coming under the same general law, are exactly alike. However it may be elsewhere, I am perfectly convinced, that the fewer and more simple the laws are in our primary schools, the easier will they be governed.

If I were to advise one of my own sons, on this head, I should say, "When you open your school, make it your first business to assign every child his place, and to establish perfect order in the school-room. No matter about the studies or recitations the first day. You will want most of the time for expressing your views, and for telling the school what you shall expect and require. As you proceed, notice the first deviation from the general course which you have marked out, and let the child understand that you are quite in earnest, and mean to insist on implicit obedience. In this way, give 'line upon line, and precept upon precept,' for a very few days, and it will be effectual with nine-tenths of your scholars. And even where it is not, I advise you to 'forbear threatening,' as much as possible. It is rarely the safest and best way to tell a boy, 'If you do that again, I will punish you so and so;' for when the offence is repeated, there may be mitigating circumstances which will make you regret that you did not reserve the right of varying the punishment. Rather let him understand that you are determined to be obeyed at all hazards; and that you intend to follow him up, with all the severity which the attainment of the end requires. But if you threaten a specific punishment, be sure to execute." You cannot flinch, without virtually giving up your authority, and making yourself infinite trouble.

Demand nothing but what the best good of your school requires. Make your views, wishes and determinations known to every scholar, with the reasons of them. Carry every thing with a steady hand. Nip every encroachment upon your authority in the bud. Never suffer yourself to be teased into an indulgence which your better judgment would withhold. In all ordinary cases, let your words "drop as the honey-comb." Be consistent and uniform in your whole administration. What you require or forbid to-day, require or forbid to-morrow. Be strictly impartial in your government. Be just as exact with the children of the rich as the poor—with those of your best friends as with others. Convince the whole school, by your untiring assiduity, that you have no pique to gratify, no by-ends to accomplish; but that your sole object is to do them good, and that the severest discipline which you ever inflict, is extorted by a solemn conviction of duty.

#### CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.

Earnestly as I have insisted upon the importance of moral influence in common school government, and strongly as I should deprecate the frequent use of the rod, or the ferule, I am by no means prepared to say that corporal punishments should never be resorted to. On the contrary, I believe that they are sometimes as necessary to the school as in the family; and that to "spare the rod, would be to spoil the child."

In the best governed schools not only is the rod rarely used, but it is never kept in sight. It is only sent for when all other means have failed. In such a case, as much should be made of the preparations as possible. All the studies and recitations should be suspended. The culprit should be brought out and arraigned. A handful of well chosen sprouts should be brought in and toughened in the fire, especially if he be stout and stubborn, and then used with great coolness and discretion. One such scene will do more to deter from transgression than a thousand blows dealt out, as they sometimes are, in a passion, or where milder means would answer a great deal better.

#### PARENTAL CO-OPERATION IN THE GOVERNMENT OF SCHOOLS.

I have only to add, that no school can be well regulated and governed, without the co-operation of parents and school committees. If what the teacher does in the school-room is counteracted at home; if parents, when a child is punished, take part with him against the master, and proclaim their dissatisfaction in the ears of the whole district, it is in vain for any one to think of going on for a single hour. Many schools have been broken up and ruined, just in this way. Some ungoverned and overgrown scholar just entering his teens, and belonging to an influential family, refuses to obey the laws and is punished. He goes home with a grievous complaint. His father entertains it, and his mother cannot have her Tommy abused so. The flame spreads, and the teacher is either driven away, or leaves in disgust. How true is it, in this case, as well as in a thousand others, that "one sinner destroys much good." We have seen it, and mourned over it. Tommy is now prepared to resist every attempt to bring him into subjection, whether at home or at

school; and if he is not actually ruined, no thanks to his parents for saving him. Extreme cruelty would certainly justify a parent in taking his child out of school, and using all his influence to displace the teacher. But in none save extreme cases, is it safe to interfere. It paralyzes the arm of necessary discipline at once; and without government what is any school good for? There are some cases in which the recreant scholar is too old to be subjected to corporal punishment; and then it is the duty of the committee to come to the teacher's aid, and exclude the rebel at once from the enjoyment of privileges upon which he has so wantonly trampled.

#### NUMBER OF SCHOLARS IN ONE SCHOOL.

A school of forty is quite large enough for one teacher. I should never wish to have the number exceed thirty where my own children are educated, though I have sometimes had more than twice that number myself, and am fully aware, that some teachers can do better justice to seventy or eighty, than others can to five and twenty. A very small school, on the other hand, is not apt to be profitable. The children need more excitement than they are likely to feel, where there are not more than three or four in a class. Or perhaps the fault may be in the teacher; the stimulus not being sufficient to call his energies into vigorous action. But no district ought ever to crowd sixty or seventy scholars, of all ages and both sexes, into one school-room. It is impossible for any teacher to take care of so many, and "divide to every one his portion in due season." Nor is it at all necessary to impose such a burden. Let the school be divided. Call in the aid of a well qualified female teacher, according to the plan already suggested, and furnish her with a convenient room for the instruction of the younger classes.

#### SCHOLARS SHOULD BE SENT EARLY, PUNCTUALLY, AND REGULARLY TO SCHOOL.

It is the habit of some parents to keep their children at home a week, or two, after the school opens. Just let them look at the subject in its true light. How can a child be expected to commence his studies with all that interest which is so essential to rapid improvement, when the class has been going on for a number of days, perhaps weeks, before he came in? Let the parent simply ask himself, what would be the effect upon my feelings, if, in setting out upon a long journey, I were detained till my friends had got the start of a hundred miles? Every one knows with how much more pleasure and success we prosecute any undertaking, in connection with others, when we commence upon equal terms, than when we labor all the while under the discouragement of being behind.

Children, much more than adults, are creatures of sympathy—of instinctive emulation. They love to start and go on together, and lose a great deal when they are kept out of school at the beginning of the term. Shall I be told, that I am not at all aware, how difficult it is for the poor to keep up with the revolutions of the seasons, and have their children in readiness when the schools open? But I am quite aware of it. I happen to know all about it; and I know too, what can be done where the parents of very limited means view the subject right, and are stimulated to corresponding efforts.

Another point of great importance is, to have every scholar in his seat, at the opening of the school both morning and afternoon. It is a common and a just complaint, with teachers in scattered districts, and I believe I may add, in populous villages also, that a considerable number of the children are late at school, especially in short and cold mornings. They come in, "stringing along," as our grand mothers used to say, and half frozen, after the school is begun, to the great annoyance of the teacher, and the very serious interruption of all his arrangements for the day. It is ten o'clock before he can get the classes filled up, and every thing quiet and settled for study and recitations. Thus an hour in a day is nearly lost to the whole school, by the tardiness of a few. This, in all ordinary cases, is inexcusable. No parent has a right in this way to abridge the privileges of his more punctual neighbors, to say nothing of the loss which his own children experience.

Regular attendance from day to day through the season, is another thing quite essential to the improvement of the scholar, and the highest perfection of our common school system. Some children are kept out a third, or one quarter of the time, without their parents ever dreaming of the irreparable loss growing out of this irregularity. It is admitted, indeed, that the boy cannot be expected to learn quite so much as if he had no interruptions; but the great diminution of interest in the studies, which these interruptions occasion, is rarely taken into the account. How can any one who is broken off his books, and is away from his class two or three days in a week, keep up that attention and ardor, without which, rapid advances are never made in any stage or branch of education? Where the circumstances of a family are such that a child cannot possibly be spared more than half the winter, it is far more profitable to keep him at his studies regularly, while he does go, than to send him irregularly through the whole season.

In farming districts, it is quite common, I believe, for fathers to take out their older sons from the school a month, or perhaps more, before it closes. They want them in their barns and woodyards, so as to get every thing out of the way before the warm season opens. I do not deny but that this cutting a lad short in his studies, may sometimes be necessary; but it is exceedingly to be regretted; and where he is making good proficiency, he ought to be continued as long as he can possibly be spared. It is better to cultivate a little less land, than to hinder him from getting at least a thorough common education.

#### DUTIES OF COUNTY DEPUTY.

"I promised God, that I would look upon every child as a being who could claim of me before God, if I did not provide for him the best education, as a man and a Christian, which it was possible for me to provide."—DINTER.

To no one belongs a higher sphere of duty. Its object is the advance of society; its range includes the character and destiny of those rising generations, whose ranks are now pressing up the steps of life, and will soon occupy our places,

moulding our laws and changing our institutions at their sovereign pleasure. In fifteen years the sceptre of religious and civil liberty passes into their hands, and whether it be wielded for weal or woe depends on the means now used by the educators of our youth. To the county-inspector is given the supervision of those educators, and to him the friends of education look for fidelity no misrepresentation can shake, and zeal that no apathy can dishearten.

We shall not now enter into a particular examination of the duties of this office. In a future number we shall compare the results of the first year of their efficient labors, with what has heretofore been accomplished; and if some of the reports already received, with their full and detailed tabular returns, their judicious suggestions, their careful examination of the wants and defects of our schools, their earnest enforcement of duty by trustees, parents and teachers, and their interesting illustration and confirmation of their views by facts drawn from the experience of the first year of their duty,—are such as shall be received from all the deputies of the state, then the most sanguine friends of the cause will realize their highest expectations.

In one or two cases we have the tabular returns without "remarks;" this is the "dead letter;" give us the "spirit that maketh alive."

#### DUTIES OF PARENTS.

"A large part of the difficulties of the school teacher have their origin in the want of co-operation, or the misdirected influence of the parents."—PAGE.

A teacher of a school looks to the parents, or guardians of the children who attend it, for their co-operation, and is disappointed if he does not receive it. He has a right to expect their aid in carrying out his plans of instruction and government. They have placed him in the very responsible station which he occupies. He has been examined and considered worthy of it by their appointed agents, clothed with the official authority of the state. He may surely claim, under such circumstances, their confidence and support. If he is unfit for his situation, are not they in fault, who have introduced him into it? Have they not betrayed their trust? What can they do but to remove him as speedily as possible, and supply his place with one more worthy of it? Surely the great body of the teachers, both male and female, of our common schools, have an undoubted right to expect that they will receive the hearty co-operation, especially of parents, in the management of the children who are placed under their care; and I have no doubt, that the great majority of teachers will say, that one of the greatest difficulties which they have to encounter, in the discharge of their arduous duties, is, that they have so very little of this co-operation. Such a failure of support on the part of parents, must discourage them greatly; and in many cases it is the principal reason why things go wrong in the school.

There is an intimate connection between the conduct of the children at home and in the school. It is impossible to separate the one from the other, so that there shall not be a strong, reciprocal influence. If the teacher has bad management, and thus counteracts the good discipline of the parent, the latter is quick enough to complain. Why should he not be as ready to feel that he is under equal obligations, to aid the teacher in conducting his part of the training of the children with success?

In every family which is governed and instructed at all as it ought to be, and where the parents maintain a consistent character for moral worth and practical wisdom, their opinions on all subjects, and especially of individuals around them, have great weight with their household. The manner in which they speak of their friends and acquaintances, and treat them, will pretty much determine the manner in which these persons will be spoken of and treated by the younger members of the family. It will readily be seen, therefore, that the degree of respect which the children will entertain for the profession of school-teaching; and for the particular instructor whose school they attend, must depend greatly on the views that their parents hold on this subject, and the conduct they pursue with regard to it. If they take occasion frequently to express their high sense of the value of our schools, and of the business of teaching; if they let it be seen that the teacher of their children has their confidence; and especially if they endeavor by a daily and practical co-operation to aid him in carrying into effect his plans for the proper management and the improvement of his pupils, the latter in those families where such a course is pursued, cannot fail of being greatly benefited by it in all that relates to their progress in knowledge at school, and in the formation of good principles and habits. On the other hand, what will more certainly tend to make a disrespectful, wayward, and indolent pupil, than for a child to hear nothing from his parents favorable to the school which he attends, or the individual who has the charge of it, and to witness no efforts on their part to sustain and encourage him in his labors?

Children very early begin to have their peculiar views of men and things, and, as their intellectual and moral powers gain strength, they act more and more from settled principles, and form established habits of thought, feeling and conduct. This is true to a greater extent than we are apt to imagine. Hence you will find, just as it is among older persons, that there is a public opinion belonging to the men and women in miniature in the family, in the neighborhood, in the school, and not unfrequently in the village and town. We must mould this youthful public opinion aright, and then use it for important and worthy purposes.

#### PARENTS SHOULD KNOW THE TEACHER.

One of the first things which the parents of the children who attend a school, should do, is to become personally acquainted with the teacher. He may be a stranger in the place, and any early attentions shewn him in the way of civility and kindness, will be peculiarly acceptable. They will leave an impression on his mind of the interest felt in him and his occupation, which will be productive of the hap-



piest results. Is he not fairly entitled to such attentions, seeing he is the individual to whom is to be entrusted so important a charge as that of exercising an influence next to that of the parent in the education of his children?

Suppose a farmer, a mechanic, or a merchant, were about to consign a considerable department of his business to the management of a young man with whom he had none, or a very partial acquaintance, would he not be prompt to make this acquaintance more intimate? Would he not wish to secure his confidence and good-will, and enjoy the means, too, of having a salutary influence over him, by showing him those civilities in the way of social intercourse, which are so grateful to the feelings of such as are just coming forward in the business of life?

Are dollars and cents of higher value than the minds and hearts of the rising generation? What must the teacher think of the estimate placed on his occupation, and of the responsibilities connected with it, who finds himself neglected by the very parents of the youth who are placed under his care? Is not such neglect one of the most effectual means of leading him to a want of interest in his employment, and to remissness in the discharge of his duties?

But let him be treated with that attention which his situation truly deserves; let him be invited to the homes of his scholars, and find there a cordial welcome and occasion of improvement and innocent enjoyment, and the happy results can hardly be appreciated. Make the experiment. Let the parent or guardian of youth, whose eye may meet these lines, set about the immediate performance of this duty, and see if the writer is mistaken in his views. Call in a friendly way on the teacher of the school which your children attend. Ask him, (or the young lady, as the case may be,) to visit you at some suitable time. Invite a few friends to meet him. Do all in your power to make the visit a pleasant and profitable one. Interest your visitors in the teacher. Have your children present in their best attire, and with their happiest faces. Let them witness the cordiality and respect with which you treat him whom you wish them also to love and obey. Introduce topics of conversation connected with the improvement of the school. Draw out the views and wishes of the teacher. Ascertain how you can aid him in his work. Give him in a friendly and not dictatorial manner, your suggestions. Encourage him to call again, and make him feel that you, and your family are his friends. Try this, and watch the effect.

#### IMPORTANCE OF FREQUENT VISITATION.

The schools should be frequently visited by the parents and guardians of the scholars. Long visits are not necessary. If you cannot spend an hour, you can surely stay half that length of time, and do this once a month, which would be less than two days a year. Suppose it should be three or four days, what would this amount of time be, compared with the object to which it would be devoted, and the good to be attained. If all the parents, both fathers and mothers, and other adult members of the family, and friends of education would do this, it would give a new impulse to the exertions of the teachers, and the application of the scholars. It is natural for us all to be cheered and encouraged in our various pursuits when we find that the intelligent, the virtuous, and the influential take an interest in them, and approve our well meant endeavors to do our duty, and sympathize with our success in performing it.

This principle of human nature is susceptible of being called into lively exercise in the case of the teachers of our schools. A judicious remark of approbation from a parent or friend of the scholars in the school-room, in the presence of those whose attachment and respect are so important to the successful discharge of the teacher's duties, would tend greatly to sustain him in his arduous trust, and to make him feel that he has not to stand alone in meeting its responsibilities. His improvements in the modes of instruction, his talent for commending the attention of the scholars, and his wise and efficacious plans of discipline, being appreciated by others whose opinions he esteems, and whose countenance he feels that he needs, he will be the more confirmed in all that is excellent in his operations, and be ready to receive suggestions for the amendment of his deficiencies or errors.

But, on the other hand, if he perceives that his school, how much so ever labor he may bestow upon it, or whatever degree of success may attend his efforts, is neglected by the whole community around him, and he left to "plod his weary way," alone, without sympathy, approbation and support, unless he is endowed with a strong and ever-active sense of duty, or great force of character in some other way, must become discouraged and grow remiss in his exertions. He will soon be found, if any one should happen to look in upon him, to have come to the conclusion to get along tolerably well, earn his pittance of wages, and be contented with escaping downright censure and reproach. How many teachers of our schools are in this precise condition, and how many parents and guardians of youth have contributed, by their utter neglect in visiting their schools, to place them in it.

Great care should be taken, however, to act wisely. Do not begin with finding fault,—with detecting errors and deficiencies, and pointing out the remedies. Reserve this, if it is necessary, to a somewhat later period of intercourse with the teacher, and then let it be done in a delicate and respectful manner, so as not to wound his feelings, or to run any risk of lowering him in the estimation of the scholars. With regard, indeed, to most things in which he is deficient, a private interview for this purpose is far preferable. In administering counsel, every thing depends upon the time and manner of doing it; and no observer of human nature but must have noticed how differently the same individual will receive admonition according as the occasion, and the mode of giving it may be appropriate or not, and the person who imparts it exercises a kind and conciliatory, or a dogmatical and overbearing spirit. Some individuals can say almost any thing in the way of advice, or even reproof to others, without giving offence, and so as to produce the most salutary impressions. If the teacher of your school needs to have counsel with regard to any considerable defects in the performance of his duty, let the task of giving it devolve on some such individual.

When you visit the school, not only drop a few judicious words of approbation, where it can be done truly and without the appearance of flattery, to encourage the teacher, but do the same thing, also, with regard to the scholars. Some

remarks of this kind will let both see that you do not come as mere censors, to spy out faults, and to criticize all that is going on for the sake of administering rebukes. You will be regarded as a friend, and at the close of your first visit, or perhaps more favorably at your second or third, you can begin to advise the scholars freely on the points in their conduct which need it, and to tell them of their faults and the remedies, so as to produce the reformation that is desirable.

Be careful, too, in all that you say and do, to recognize the teacher as presiding over the affairs of the school. Even members of school committees, and school visitors, should do this. He is placed there, and clothed with official authority for this purpose. Honor his office in the view of those whom you require to submit to his government. Let him feel, and his scholars distinctly see, that if you act at all in his capacity in the way of imparting instruction or advice to those under his care, it is with his consent, and a due deference to his authority. A contrary course, which is sometimes pursued with as little wisdom as delicacy of feeling, is one of the surest methods to diminish the respect which the teacher should receive from his scholars, and without which he will sadly fail in the successful management of his school. —Gallaudet.

#### DUTIES OF TEACHERS.

*"Vulgar ambition seeks to sway multitudes of men, and influence widely the operations of society. The successful teacher establishes a far nobler, wider, surer empire. He influences mind; mind that will wake and mould mind again."*

*"School-masters of America, appreciate the high motives and encouragements thrown around you. Up! to your high vocation. Your country needs your aid."*—WHITE.

The teacher must occupy the whole ground opened to him by the community. He must engrave the new on the old. He must thus secure every advantage of the best among established methods of teaching, and then add, as circumstances shall permit, the results of his recent experience and of his entire progress and ability to teach.

Let him reflect the light he has gained on the parent. By visiting, when practicable, the homes of his scholars, and conversing with their guardians; and by inducing them to visit him in his school-room, he can do much to soften prejudice, to introduce more liberal ideas of education, and to correct hoary-headed errors. He should be the architect, drawing the true plan of a well educated child; and by giving as well as receiving suggestions, help to produce a finished model, one by which parent, teacher and child shall join to erect a symmetrical edifice.

Do you say, teacher, that this will take too much time; that all you can do is to instruct your scholars, while they are with you, six hours in the day? I ask, if it would not save time to have so gained the confidence of the parents by personal interviews, that they would study to comprehend, and would earnestly co-operate in your method of instruction and government? As things now proceed, the teacher and the parent are, too often, opposing parties; the one requiring punctual attendance; the other regarding every hour taken from the daily complement, for his boy to do errands, or for the daughter in domestic pursuits, as so much nett gain. The one sending messages for new books; the other flaring against teacher, and committee perhaps, for requiring so many books. The instructor would teach few branches and make thorough scholars; but the parent demands a long list of imposing studies. Now, were an expense of time needed, to visit and ingratiate himself with the parents, there would be a saving of temper and patience. The nerves would be spared, even though an extra hour must be occasionally given, after a day of toil, to visiting, enlightening and conciliating, the guardians of the children.

Supposing, for the present, the teacher to be master in fact, as he is nominally of the course his pupils shall pursue, what should be his aim and endeavor? The general answer is, his mark must be high. He who aims low will be certain of doing but little, while the arrow directed towards the sun, cannot strike a point below mediocrity.

The scholar must be instructed in the exercise and direction of all his faculties. We must do more than simply impress our own opinions and assertions on the mind of our pupil. How much of school tuition has made the intellect a mere scrap-table, on which the teacher has cemented all kinds of pictures. What pieces of transfer-work are the minds of many children. It is not easy entirely to avoid this evil. The teacher is sadly tempted to tell his scholar how the problem in hand is solved, or the word parsed, and there end his trouble. But such instruction is treason to the child. Never carry knowledge to him; but hold it out toward him, so near that he can reach it, and yet so distant that he must make an effort to obtain it.

Let the teacher guard, too, against his own undue preferences among the studies of his school. He likes grammar perhaps better than arithmetic; but is it right to deprive his scholars of a knowledge of that science for self-gratification? Or shall one teach geography, or history, or studies which have text-books with printed questions, merely because this is the easier course? If he be competent to his task he will be qualified to instruct in every branch expected in a school like his. And where conscience is alive, he will strive to subdue his own prepossessions, and to aid his scholars in obtaining a complete education.

The laws of health are a proper object of school instruction. If the body be diseased, the mind will suffer with it. Hence the teacher should inform his scholars of the conditions of health, and the causes of sickness, for the sake of their intellectual progress. If they bring unripe fruit to the school-room, he has an opportunity to give a short lecture on diet. Does he observe a pupil bending over his desk, let him give the school some idea of the lungs, and show the necessity, for their well-being, of an upright posture. He can instruct them incidentally on the virtues of cleanliness, on the structure and offices of the brain, that great organ they are daily to exercise; on the evils of impure air; on the need of sufficient, yet regulated exercise, and on many kindred topics. Plato, the father of spiritual philosophy, received his name from the broad shoulders which he acquired by bodily exercise. Let our teachers aim to reproduce Platos; physical, no less than intellectual ones.

Among the objects of the school, I regard moral teaching as of the last importance. Every instructor should propose to

himself the formation, in his pupils, of sound principles and virtuous habits. With a parental oversight, he ought daily to inculcate the necessity of truth, love, justice, courtesy, industry, self-respect, order, submission,—in one word,—of an unceasing self-control. The child desires to be a man; he pants for freedom and independence. He must be convinced that true freedom comes not from length of years, nor from the acquisition of property, nor from mental culture alone, but from a life sustained by inward resources, and dedicated to moral excellence.

The teacher must excite the interest of his pupils in their studies. Before doing this he must himself feel a deep interest in the children; he must love them, and desire to do them good. Without these feelings, he will find all helps and appliances fruitless. I once knew a teacher, who complained of dull scholars, recommended to procure illustrations, pictures, cabinets, and apparatus. But, valuable as these are, in the true hands, there was one aid omitted in the catalogue, which would have supplied the place of them all; and that was a hearty love of his work. That man toiled in the school-room only to make money. He absolutely hated his occupation, and for children, he loved them only at a distance. How could it be, that he was not beating always up a river, and against a tremendous current?

Again, secure the greatest possible concentration of mind, while you, at any time, exact study, or hear the recitations of the children. We lose immeasurably by requiring a length of attention to their books inconsistent with severe application. A child learns nothing, while in that dreamy, half-living state, in which many spend much of the three hour's exercise. Memory depends on attention; and that can be given unremittingly but for a few moments at once. Children are volatile and unfixed in their thoughts. We should never forget this, but allow them perhaps more time than we commonly do for their recess, or change their objects of attention more frequently. Let the teacher select his own means, but I would earnestly press the necessity of requiring a fixed, intense application of the mind, when study and exercises are in hand, and of giving proportionate recreations.

Teach habits of observation. Children naturally discriminate. They do it in their sports; the boy always knows who should stand at the goal, and who toss the ball. Make him just as certain in his studies. For this purpose he must watch. He must distinguish between things very nearly alike. Educate him to perceive shades of difference in truth and error. Do not allow him to call a thing yellow which is orange-colored, or that white which is of pearly aspect. Thus only can we train up men, to be accurate in business, to testify intelligently and correctly in a court of justice, to be true specimens of the symmetrical man.

Children should be educated in good habits of expression. They must not only know how a problem is solved, but must be able to state the method clearly and fully. Quite as much is gained by endeavors to communicate knowledge as by solitary study. This habit gives a command of language, which the scholar will hardly otherwise acquire. It shows him the extent of his resources, and where he needs fresh application. It gives him fluency of utterance, and at the same time grammatical propriety. In some schools the teacher is content with guessing out the ideas and meaning of the scholars. They speak, by hints, in half-formed sentences, and with a tone and manner so loose, disjointed and slovenly, as to savor of any place rather than a school-room. It is quite as important for the education of a child that we should understand him, as he us. Thus only can we determine, whether he is really acquainted with the subject before him, whether he has just ideas, or is only giving us mouthfuls of words.

Aim in all things to secure the utmost accuracy. Do you teach writing? Be not satisfied with a scholar's marking over the destined page, or half page, but see that every letter is correctly formed, if but ten be written for an exercise. Are they spelling? Do not judge of their proficiency by the number of columns they can falter through. If each pupil can spell but a single word, let that word be first pronounced, and that distinctly, and then let each syllable be given separately, and each letter with its exact sound.

But the most infallible means of success in teaching is, that the teacher add to all other helps that of taking constant heed to himself. Of all the streams he would send forth, he must be the upper spring. It is not by set speeches, that he can convey all knowledge to his scholars. Unless he possess the personal power to excite a thirst for learning, his efforts may only tend to their intellectual poverty. He must gain and secure their affections. Love is the silken cord, stronger than cables of coercion, by which he must draw them to the fountains of wisdom. It will be his countenance, his manner, his tones, and not his cold words alone, that will interest their young hearts in him, and through him, in the studies they pursue. Let him not hope to effect any thing, however, by mere appearances. Children pierce every covering and see the naked heart. We must, therefore, subdue all unkind and unjust feelings, and cherish a parental regard for our pupils.

The teacher should watch daily the occurrences of the school-room, and draw thence materials to mould their characters. If the plant be watered at the right hour, when the calm evening of reflection has come, its root will be nourished, and vigor, and beauty, and life will be shed through its foliage and flowers. The same service performed in the heat of mid-day, when the sun of passion is high, would but waste the waters of wisdom, and leave the stock parched with all evil.

Has the teacher any trouble with his scholars, let him always recollect the advice of Salzman, and "look first for the cause of it, in himself." Let him regard his own practice as a model for theirs. Must they be accurate, so let him be. Does he expect them to be diligent, just, patient, benevolent, pure, he should ask if these traits will spring naturally from sympathy with his spirit? This nation needs shining lights at the teacher's desk. Each who now fills that high station should count himself called to be a reformer. As Fellenberg, when looking on Switzerland, said of the three hundred pupils training for its teachers, so let this people say of you: "These instructors are the great engine to regenerate the land." So estimate your office and you will each be a living code, enlightening the minds, purifying the hearts, and, under God, redeeming the souls of the precious land,



given by parental solicitude and in patriotic faith to your charge, to be prepared by you for the solemn and illimitable future.—*Dr. Muzzey's Lectures.*

#### THE DUTY OF INSTRUCTORS IN RELATION TO SCHOOL-HOUSES.

"Though instructors may, ordinarily, have no direct agency in erecting and repairing the buildings where they are employed to keep school, yet, by a little carefulness, ingenuity, and enterprise, they can do much to avoid some of the evils connected with them. When about to open a school, they can look at the house, as a mechanic at his shop, and adapt their system to the building, and not carry into a house, ill adapted to its development, a system of operations, however speculatively just it may appear in their own minds. The buildings are already constructed, and of materials not over plastic, and often as incapable of accommodating a system got up in some other place, as the house of the Vicar of Wakefield was for the family painting. Instructors should make the most of what is comfortable and convenient, and remedy, as far as possible, what is bad. If the pupils are uncomfortably seated, they can allow them occasionally to change their seats, or alter their position, which, though attended with some inconvenience, cannot be compared with the evils growing out of pain and restlessness, and the effects which are likely to be produced upon the health, the disposition, morals, and progress in learning, from a long confinement in an uneasy position. Instructors can, and ought to use their influence and authority to preserve the buildings from injuries, such as cutting the tables, loosening and splitting the seats, breaking the doors and windows, by which most houses of this class are shamefully mutilated, and their inconveniences, great enough at first, are increased. The extent to which injuries of this kind are done, and the inconveniences arising from them in respect of writing-books and clothes, are great beyond what is ordinarily thought; and as it is possible in a considerable degree to prevent them, they should not be tolerated. So far as the scholars are concerned, they may arise from a mixture of causes;—thoughtlessness, idleness, a restless disposition, or real intent to do injury. But whatever may be the cause, it argues an imperfection in the moral principle, which, were it in wholesome exercise, would teach them that it is equally iniquitous to damage public as private property. The practice we refer to, is actual injustice, a real trespass, for which, in almost all other cases, the offender would be called to an account. And we must confess that it is matter of just surprise, that more efforts have not been made to prevent it. A high responsibility relative to this concern, rests on the instructors. The power of preventing this, lies principally with them. It is obvious then to remark, if they have much reason to complain for want of better accommodations, they have some reason to reform; and in measuring out the blame which justly rests somewhere, to take a little portion to themselves. We are persuaded that school-houses will be more readily built and repaired, when instructors shall use more exertions to save them from the folly and indiscretion of children. The injuries complained of, we are persuaded, if not wholly, yet to a great extent, can be prevented: and it is high time that parents and teachers should bring together their fixed and operative determination, to suffer them no longer. Separate from the inconveniences which scholars themselves experience from them, a licentious and irresponsible feeling, in regard to public property, is encouraged. If the well-known loose sense of obligation in respect to public interests, and the wanton injuries which are so frequently done to institutions of a public nature of every description, so pre-eminently common throughout this country, do not spring up in the habits referred to, they are certainly most powerfully fostered by them; and there is great reason to apprehend, that a principle so loose in respect to public property, must extend itself by easy transitions to private. In every view, the practice is wrong, and the effect corrupting; and it is high time that the attention of the community was directed to it, the obligations of men on this subject, more fully taught, and, when necessary, enforced in all our institutions of learning, from the infant school to the professional hall, not excepting our theological seminaries, where, if in any place, we should expect regard would be paid to public rights, and the bestowments of private munificence; and we could wish the evil complained of, stopped here; but truth constrains us to say, that the tables and seats of the bench and bar in our court-houses, the pews, and even the pulpits, in our places of religious worship, bear evident marks, that neither the 'ermine nor the lawn,' is sufficient to restrain this most shameful, deforming, and mischievous practice.

#### CARE OF THE FIRE.

"Teachers should take the management of the fire entirely under their own control; for though their own feelings may not be the thermometer of the room, yet, if they are at all qualified to teach, they must possess more discretion on the subject, than those under them. They should see that the room is in a comfortable condition by the time the exercises commence. Many a half day is nearly wasted, and sometimes, from the disorder consequent upon the state of things, worse than lost, because, when the children collect, the room is so cold, that they cannot study, nor can they be still. Nothing short of the master's being in the house a half hour before the school commences, can, ordinarily, secure the object referred to. It may be objected, that instructors are not employed to build fires. We do not ask them to do it; but we ask them to see that fires are seasonably built. And we must think those who can define so nicely the limits of their obligations, as to excuse themselves from this care, have not the spirit of high-minded and enterprising teachers, and that, however worthy they may be, and however well qualified for other employments, they should never offer themselves for that of school-keeping.

#### MORAL EFFECT OF CLEANLINESS.

"Instructors should see, also, that the school-room be, in all its parts, kept in a clean and comfortable condition. Cleanliness is not ordinarily ranked so high, nor is the contrary habit ranked so low, in the scale of moral worth and sinful defilement, as they should be, nor do they, as we fear, enter so fully into the account when men are estimating their own moral state, or when others are estimating it for them, as they ought. We will not say, as a very able and careful observer of men once said, that he did not believe any person could be a true Christian, who was not becomingly neat

in his person and in his business; yet we are free to say, that every additional year's intercourse with the world in moral and religious concerns, deepens the conviction, that cleanliness is inseparable from any considerable advancement in a religious life, and that where its requirements are disregarded, there is much reason to apprehend that other and important defects of a moral nature do, most probably, exist. Cleanliness in one's person, and the various occupations, is intimately connected with manly and upright conduct, chaste and pure thoughts, and sensible comfort in any situation; and, as a service exacted, or a habit established, would go far to secure good order and agreeable conduct in any school. We are persuaded that one of the most powerful helps towards good government, and consequent orderly conduct among the pupils, is overlooked, through inattention or ignorance, where this principle is not called in; and where an exertion to establish a principle and habit of neatness has not been put forth, one of the strong bonds to a future worthy moral conduct is lost, and a most important and legitimate object of instruction and education neglected. Great exertions should be used to cultivate among the pupils a taste for cleanliness, decency, and elegance in all things, and their particular responsibility in respect to the proper state of the house, and all its outward connections. This is their home, for the good and decent state of which, their character is at stake, and their comfort involved. They should firmly and perseveringly resolve, that the school-room should be kept clean; not simply swept, but often washed, and every day dusted. Without this attention, it is impossible their own persons, their clothes, or books, can be preserved in a decent and comfortable state. The room they should consider as their parlor, and those that occupy it, company to one another. The room must, therefore, always be in a visiting condition. And what should prevent this? Cannot a number of young people, all of whom, it must be presumed, are trained to order and neatness at home, bring the principles of order and neatness into an apartment, where they are to spend so much time together, and where any one, who knows much of the business of common families, must know there is less excuse for any disorder or dirt, than there is in most of our houses? We know it is practicable to have a school-room kept in a comfortable condition, and that youth instructed and encouraged to do this, and having their attention sufficiently directed to it, will soon become interested in the subject, and manifest a commendable disposition to have things as they ought to be, and a willingness to make all the personal efforts which are required, to accomplish it. And we are persuaded, that, when this is attempted, it will be found, perhaps, to the surprise of many, that from the less injury done to the clothes of scholars and to the books, as well as from the better conduct which will invariably ensue, many of the evils connected with our common schools, would be removed.

"It is a fact, susceptible of as perfect demonstration as any moral proposition, that filth and dirt, if they be in part the effect, are, at the same time, among the most efficient causes of corrupt morals and debased conduct. Gisborne, in one of his works, has a remark of this kind, (we do not pretend to quote his words,) that in a part of London, more young families, who, at setting out in life, promise well, are made corrupt, and led into wretched and destructive habits, from the unhappy location of houses, which renders all attempts to keep them in a pure and comfortable condition ineffectual, than from any other single cause. Ineffectual efforts to keep things neat lead to neglect, neglect to filthy habits, and filthy habits to low and degraded vice. If such be the operation of a want of neatness in families, and we apprehend the justness of the remark will find support in instances which must have fallen within the knowledge of every attentive observer, are there not reasons to fear, that the same effects will follow the same course in school? There can be no doubt that, in many instances, a sense of propriety is destroyed, in more, greatly weakened, by the state of things in and about the houses of education. A disregard to this subject, too common among scholars, often settles down into a confirmed habit, and gradually spreads itself over the whole surface of action, and through life; the individual becomes less interesting in his appearance, less agreeable in his manners, less honorable in his conduct, and less moral and upright in his principles.

#### THE DISCOMFORT OF CHILDREN INJURES THEIR DISPOSITIONS.

"Instructors should also guard against the bad influence upon the dispositions and manners of scholars, which the inconveniences they experience are apt to produce. The pain and uneasiness which a child experiences from an uncomfortable situation in school, he will very likely associate with his books and studies, or with the instructor and regulations of school; he may connect them with those who sit near him, and who may be just as uneasy as himself, and be ready to hate the whole and quarrel with all, because he feels pain, and cannot, or does not, rightly understand the occasion of it. The local situation of children in school has a most obvious bearing upon the conduct and temper. Place them a little out of the observation of the instructor, and they will play; put them where they are crowded, or sit with inconvenience, and they will quarrel. 'It has often been a subject of interest to me,' says one of the committee, when visiting schools, 'to observe the operations of local circumstances upon the mind and conduct of children; and the more I have observed, the more importance am I constrained to attach to these things. In one house where I have many times called, I do not recollect ever passing a half hour, without seeing contention among those placed in a particular part of the room, and play in another. I distinctly recollect the same thing in the seminary where I pursued my preparatory studies. It was obvious in the lecture-room in college. In the seminary which I had the care of for some years, it was so apparent that I often changed the situation of those who were unfavorably placed, to prevent the feelings and conduct likely to be produced from settling down into confirmed habits. For permanent bad effects may and have, in fact, grown out of these circumstances. Quarrels, also, which have sprung up between children, and which had no other legitimate cause, than their being placed together in school, on uncomfortable seats, have led to a state of unkind feelings, and unfriendly conduct through life. The influence has sometimes extended beyond the individuals; fami-

lies and neighborhoods have been drawn into the contention; and, in not a few instances, whole districts thrown into disorder, only because at first some little twig of humanity had become restless and quarrelsome, in consequence of his uneasy position in school.'

"But if the effect be confined to the individual, yet it may be sufficiently unhappy. Suppose, from one of the causes above named, the child acquire a habit of loose and foolish playfulness, or of restless discontent—suppose he acquire a disrelish for school, his books, or unkind feelings towards his instructor, or his fellows—will there not be much personal loss, and is there no danger of future consequences—is there no danger that these feelings will go into future life, and the individual prove less comfortable to himself, and less comfortable to others? Youth is the season when the character is formed, and direction given to the feelings and the conduct. It is a matter of no small interest to the man himself, or those with whom he is to act in future life, that these be of a gentle and accommodating character.

#### THE SCHOOL-ROOM BE MADE PLEASANT.

"Since, therefore, from the construction of many of our school-houses, it is not possible for the scholars to be altogether free from suffering, it is a subject well worthy the special attention of instructors, carefully to guard against the consequences which it is like to produce upon their temper and conduct. This may be done, in some degree, by allowing the children occasionally to change their situation, to rise and stand up a few minutes; or, at convenient seasons, giving them a short additional recess. To remove, in some degree, the gloom and deformities of the house, and at the same time to draw off the attention from their bodily pains, scholars should be allowed to ornament it with greens and flowers, and other things of an innocent nature, attracting to the minds of youth. Agreeable objects originate agreeable feelings, and pleasant feelings lead to good conduct. We would also recommend to instructors to encourage the children, in places where there is the least prospect of security, to cultivate flower-borders upon the school-house grounds; and certainly in boxes set in the house. Should it be objected, that their attention would in this way be withdrawn from their books, we must reply, that we doubt the fact, and would in turn ask whether the feelings, the taste, and the understanding would not be most essentially improved by attention to the works of Nature, and efforts to bring to the highest perfection, those things which a wise Providence, who knows by what means the character of man is to be formed, has made beautiful to the eye. Our own feelings have often been hurt, and our views of expediency entirely crossed, when we have seen, as we have on many occasions, a handsome branch, or beautiful flower, or well-arranged nosegay, torn in a censorious and ruthless manner from the hand of a child, or the place where his love for ornament and beauty had placed it. We would encourage the children to make the room of confinement as pleasant to them, as they can consistently with other duties; and if at any time it be observed, that these things are gaining an undue influence over them, to check it as any other practice not evil in itself, but only in excess, should be corrected. It should be done in such a manner, that the child should be left free to enjoy, as far as it is safe to enjoy, and feel, too, that he does it with the full approbation and good will of his instructor.

#### HOW OUR CHILDREN ARE CONTAMINATED.

"There is one subject more to which we must be permitted to refer; one with which the morals of the young are intimately connected, one in which parents, instructors, and scholars should unite their efforts to produce a reform. There should be nothing in or about the school-houses, calculated to defile the mind, corrupt the heart, or excite wholly and forbidden appetites; yet, considering the various character of those brought together in our public schools, and considering also how inventive are corrupt minds, in exhibiting openly the defilement which reigns within, we do not know but we must expect that school-houses, as well as other public buildings, and even fences, will continue to bear occasional marks both of lust and profaneness. But we must confess, that the general apathy which apparently exists on this subject, does appear strange to us. It is an appalling fact, that in many of these houses, there are highly indecent, profane, and libidinous marks, images, and expressions, some of which are spread out in broad characters on the walls, where they unavoidably meet the eyes of all who come into the house, or, being on the outside, salute the traveller as he passes by, wounding the delicate and annoying the moral sensibilities of the heart; while there is still a much greater number, in smaller characters, upon the tables and seats of the students, and even, in some instances, of the instructors, constantly before the eyes of those who happen to occupy them. How contaminating these must be, no one can be entirely insensible. And yet how unalarmed, or if not entirely unalarmed, how little is the mind of the community directed to the subject, and how little effort put forth to stay this fountain of corruption. Such things ought not to be: they can, to a considerable extent, be prevented. The community are not, therefore, altogether clear in this matter.

"When we regard the deleterious effect which the want of accommodation and other imperfections, in and about these buildings, must have upon the growth, health, and perfectness of the bodily system, upon the mental and moral powers, upon the tender and delicate feelings of the heart, we must suppose there is as pressing a call for the direct interference of the wise and benevolent, to produce an improvement, as there is for the efforts of the Prison Discipline Society, or for many of the benevolent exertions of the day. And we do most solemnly and affectionately call upon all, according to their situation in life, to direct their attention to the subject; for the bodies, the minds, the hearts of the young and rising generation require this. It is a service due to the present and future generation. A service due to their bodies and souls."—*Essex Co. Report.*

#### GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE WINTER SCHOOL.

"The distraction and perplexity of the teacher's life are almost proverbial. There are other pressing and exhausting pursuits, which wear away the spirit by the ceaseless care which they impose, or perplex and bewilder the intellect by the multiplicity and intricacy of their details. But the busi-



ness of teaching, by a pre-eminence not very enviable, stands, almost by common consent, at the head of the catalogue.

I shall now endeavor to show how order may be produced out of that almost inextricable mass of confusion, into which so many teachers, on commencing their labors, find themselves plunged.

The objects then, to be aimed at in the general arrangements of schools, are two-fold.

1. That the teacher may be left uninterrupted, to attend to one thing at a time.

2. That the individual scholars may have constant employment, and such an amount and such kinds of study, as shall be suited to the circumstances and capacities of each.

I shall examine each in their order:

1. The following are the principal things which, in a vast number of schools, are all the time pressing upon the teacher: or rather, they are the things which must every where press upon the teacher, except so far as by the skill of his arrangements he contrives to remove them.

- .. Giving leave to whisper or to leave seats.
2. Mending pens.
3. Answering questions in regard to studies.
4. Hearing recitations.

A pretty large number of objects of attention and care, one would say, to be pressing upon the mind of the teacher as one and the same time—and *all the time*, too! Hundreds and hundreds of teachers in every part of the country, there is no doubt, have all these crowding upon them from morning to night, with no cessation, except perhaps some accidental or momentary respite. During the winter months, while the principal common schools in our country are in operation, it is sad to reflect how many teachers come home every evening, with bewildered and aching heads, having been vainly trying all the day to do six things at a time, while He who made the human mind has determined that it shall do but one. How many become discouraged and disheartened by what they consider the unavoidable trials of a teacher's life, and give up in despair, just because their faculties will not sustain a six-fold task. There are multitudes who, in early life, attempted teaching, and after having been worried almost to distraction, by the simultaneous pressure of these multifarious cares, gave up the employment in disgust, and forever afterwards wonder how any body can like teaching.

Let us then examine the various particulars above mentioned in succession, and see how each can be disposed of, so as not to be a constant source of interruption and derangement.

#### WHISPERING, AND LEAVING SEATS.

In regard to this subject, there are very different methods now in practice in different schools. In some, especially in very small schools, the teacher allows the pupils to act according to their own discretion. They whisper and leave their seats whenever they think it necessary. This plan may possibly be admissible in a very small school; that is, in one of ten or twelve pupils. I am convinced, however, that it is very bad here. No vigilant watch, which it is possible for any teacher to exert, will prevent a vast amount of mere talk, entirely foreign to the business of the school.

Appropriate particular times at which all this business is to be done, and forbid it altogether at every other time. It is well on other accounts to give the pupils of a school a little respite, at least every hour; and if this is done, an intermission of study for two minutes each time, will be sufficient. During this time, general permission should be given to speak or leave seats, provided they do nothing at such a time to disturb the studies of others. This has been my plan for two or three years, and no arrangement which I have ever made, has operated for so long a time, so uninterruptedly, and so entirely to my satisfaction, as this.

#### MENDING PENS.

The second of the sources of interruption, as I have enumerated them, is mending pens. This business ought, if possible, to have a specific time assigned to it. Scholars are in general far too particular in regard to their pens. The teacher ought to explain to them that, in the transaction of the ordinary business of life, they cannot always have exactly such a pen as they would like. They must learn to write with various kinds of pens, and when furnished with one that the teacher himself would consider suitable to write a letter to a friend with, he must be content. They should understand that the *form* of the letters is what is most important in learning to write, not the smoothness and clearness of the hair lines; and that though writing looks better, when executed with a perfect pen, a person may learn to write nearly as well with one which is not absolutely perfect. So certain is this, though often overlooked, that a person would perhaps learn faster with chalk upon a black-board, than with the best goose-quill ever sharpened.

I do not make these remarks to show that it is of no consequence, whether scholars have good or bad pens, but only that this subject deserves very much less of the time and attention of the teacher, than it usually receives. When the scholars are allowed, as they very generally are, to come when they please to present their pens, some four, five, or six times in a day—breaking in upon any business—interrupting any classes—perplexing and embarrassing the teacher, however he may be employed—there is a very serious obstruction to the progress of the scholars, which is by no means repaid by the improvement in this branch.

There are several ways by which this evil may be remedied, or at least be very effectually curtailed. Some teachers take their pens with them, and mend them in the evening at home. For various reasons, this cannot be always practised. There may, however, be a time set apart in the school specially for this purpose. But the best plan is, for the teacher not to mend the pens himself.

Let him choose from among the older and more intelligent of his scholars, four or five whom he will teach. They will be very glad to learn, and to mend every day twenty-five or fifty pens each. Very little ingenuity will be necessary to devise some plan, by which the scholars may be apportioned among these, so that each shall supply a given number, and the teacher be relieved entirely.

#### ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT STUDIES.

A teacher who does not adopt some system in regard to this subject, will be always at the mercy of his scholars. One boy will want to know how to parse a word, another where the lesson is, another to have a sum explained, and a fourth will wish to show his work, to see if it is right. The teacher does not like to discourage such inquiries. Each one, as it comes up, seems necessary: each one too, is answered in a moment; but the endless number, and the continual repetition of them, consume his time and exhaust his patience.

There is another view of the subject, which ought to be taken. Perhaps it would not be far from the truth, to estimate the average number of scholars in the schools in our country, at fifty. At any rate, this will be near enough for our present purpose. There are three hours in each session, making one hundred and eighty minutes, which, divided among fifty, give about three minutes and a half to each individual. If the reader has, in his own school, a greater or a less number, he can easily correct the above so as to adapt it to his own case, and ascertain the portion which may justly be appropriated to each pupil. It will probably vary from two to four minutes. Now a period of four minutes slips away very fast while a man is looking over perplexing problems, and if he exceeds that time at all, he is doing injustice to his other pupils. I do not mean that a man is to confine himself rigidly to the principle suggested by this calculation, of cautiously appropriating no more time to any one of his pupils than such a calculation would assign to each; but simply that this is a point which should be kept in view, and have a very strong influence in deciding how far it is right to devote attention exclusively to individuals. It seems to me that it shows very clearly, that one ought to teach his pupils, as much as possible, *in masses*, and as little as possible by private attention to individual cases.

The following directions will help the teacher to carry these principles into effect. When you assign a lesson, glance over it yourself, and consider what difficulties are likely to arise. You know the progress which your pupils have made, and can easily anticipate their difficulties. Tell them all together, in the class, what their difficulties will be, and how they may surmount them. Give them directions how they are to act, in the emergencies which will be likely to occur. This simple step will remove a vast number of the questions, which would otherwise become occasions for interrupting you. With regard to other difficulties, which cannot be foreseen and guarded against, tell them to bring them to the class, the next recitation. Half a dozen might, and very probably would meet with the same difficulty. If they bring it to you one by one, you have to answer it over and over again, whereas, when it is brought to the class, one explanation answers for all.

As to all questions about the lesson—where it is, and what it is, and how long it is—never answer them. Require each pupil to remember for himself, and if he was absent when the lesson was assigned, let him ask his class-mate in a recess.

#### HEARING RECITATIONS.

I am aware that many attempt to do something else at the same time that they are hearing a recitation, and there may perhaps be some individuals who can succeed in this. If the exercise to which the teacher is attending, consists merely in listening to the reciting, from memory, some passage committed, it can perhaps be done. I hope, however, to show, in a future chapter, that there are other and far higher objects, which every teacher ought to have in view; and he who understands these objects, and aims at accomplishing them—who endeavors to instruct his class, to enlarge and elevate their ideas, to awaken a deep and paramount interest in the subject which they are examining, will find that his time must be his own, and his attention uninterrupted, while he is presiding at a class. All the other exercises and arrangements of the school, are, in fact, preparatory and subsidiary to this. Here, that is, in the classes, the real business of teaching is to be done. Here the teacher comes in contact with his scholars, mind with mind, and here, consequently, he must be uninterrupted and undisturbed. I shall speak more particularly on this subject hereafter, under the head of instruction; all I wish to secure in this place, is that the teacher should make such arrangements, that he can devote his exclusive attention to his classes while he is actually engaged with them.

But in order that I may be specific and definite, I will draw up a plan for the regular division of time, for a common school not to be adopted, but to be imitated; i. e., I do not recommend exactly this plan, but that some plan, precise and specific, should be determined upon and exhibited to the school, by a diagram like the following:

FORENOON.				
IX	X	XI	XII	
Reading.	Writing.	R G	Arithmetic.	

AFTERNOON.				
II	III	IV	V	
Grammar.	Writing.	R G	Geography.	

A drawing on a large sheet, made by some of the older scholars, (for a teacher should never do any thing of this kind which his scholars can do for him,) should be made and posted up to view, the names of the classes being inserted in the columns, under their respective heads. At the lines at ten and three, there might be a rest of two minutes; an officer appointed for the purpose, ringing a bell at each of the parts marked on the plan, and making the signal for the rest, whatever signal might be determined upon. It is a good plan to have a bell rung five minutes before each half hour expires, and then exactly at its close. The first one would be to notify the teacher, or teachers, if there are more than one in the school, that the time for their respective recitations is drawing to a close. At the second bell the new classes should take their places, without waiting to be called for. The scholars will thus see that the arrangements of the school are based upon system, to which the teacher himself conforms, and not subjected to his own varying will. They will thus, not only go on more regularly, but they will yield more easily and pleasantly to the necessary arrangements.

The fact is, children love system and regularity. Each one is sometimes a little uneasy under the restraint which it imposes upon him individually, but they all love to see its operation upon others, and they are generally very willing to submit to its laws, if the rest of the community are required to submit too. They show this in their love of military parade: what allures them is chiefly the *order* of it; and even a little child creeping upon the floor, will be pleased when he gets his playthings in a row. A teacher may turn this principle to most useful account, in forming his plans for his school.

It will be seen by reference to the foregoing plan, that I have marked the time for the recesses, by the letter R at the top. Immediately after them, both in the forenoon and in the afternoon, twenty minutes are left, marked G, the initial standing for General Exercise. They are intended to denote periods during which all the scholars are in their seats, with their work laid aside, ready to attend to what the teacher has to bring before the whole. There are so many occasions on which it is necessary to address the whole school, that it is very desirable to appropriate a particular time for it. In most of the best schools, I believe this plan is adopted. I will mention some of the subjects, which would come up at such a time:

1. There are some studies which can be advantageously attended to by the whole school together; such as Punctuation, and, to some extent, Spelling.

2. Cases of discipline, which it is necessary to bring before the whole school, ought to come up at a regularly appointed time. By attending to them here, there will be a greater importance attached to them. Whatever the teacher does, will seem to be more deliberate, and, in fact, will be more deliberate.

3. General remarks, bringing up classes of faults which prevail; also general directions, which may at any time be needed; and, in fact, any business relating to the general arrangements of the school.

4. Familiar lectures from the teacher, on various subjects—very familiar in their form, and perhaps accompanied by questions addressed to the whole. The design of such lectures should be to extend the *general knowledge* of the pupils, in regard to those subjects on which they will need information in their progress through life. In regard to each of these particulars I shall speak more particularly hereafter, in the chapters to which they respectively belong. My only object here, is to show, in the general arrangements of the school, how a place is to be found for them. My practice has been to have two periods, of short duration, each day, appropriated to these objects. The first to the *business of the school*, and the second to such studies or lectures as could be most profitably attended to at such a time.

The Teacher, by J. Abbott.

#### COUNTY SCHOOL CONVENTIONS.

DUTCHESS.—The teachers and friends of common schools are requested to meet at Poughkeepsie, on the 15th day of October, to hear from the County Deputies a statement of the condition of the schools, and to discuss the means of their improvement. A general attendance is requested.

COLUMBIA.—The teachers and friends of common schools are requested to meet at the Court House in Hudson, on Thursday the 24th of November, at 10 o'clock, A. M. An address may be expected from Mr. Woodin the County Deputy.

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